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MUSIC IN AMERICA

BY

DR. FRÉDÉRIC LOUIS RITTER

DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC AT VASSAR COLLEGE; AUTHOR OF "MUSIC IN ENGLAND," "THE STUDENT'S HISTORY OF MUSIC," ETC.

NEW EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THIS new edition of "Music in America" has been much enriched by important historical matter. Besides the addition of two new chapters — bringing the work up to the present time — several gaps, which, for want of the desired correct information necessarily occurred in the first edition, are now filled up. Thus the history of the New-York Philharmonic Society is now as complete as the form of my book seems to require; the opera in its divers phases of evolution is treated in detail; the progress of the cultivation of instrumental (orchestral) music is traced through several cities, East and West; and due attention has been given to the musical labors of the public schools and singing-societies, and to other points where music, as an æsthetic factor, enters public and social life.

It is certainly satisfactory to me to know that the first appearance of my book helped to disperse the cloud then hanging heavily over American musical life; and the avidity with which the historical matter, that, through years of diligent research and labor, I had been able to collect, and afterwards group into a comprehensive form, was copied by busy compilers of all shades, proves that it was wanted.

In the selection of the subject-matter for this new edition I have been governed by the idea that only that which is of *real* historical and æsthetic value, and as such capable of promoting

further progress in the right artistic direction, ought to have a place in it. Had I chosen to incorporate into its pages all the casual, flimsy musical gossip, as here and there recorded by talkative writers and professional reporters, regarding the voices, the movements, the real and imaginary adventures of the numerous European artists that have, in the course of the last fifty years, appeared on the American operatic and concert stage, — and also to add the biographies of the million of music-teachers busy in the large and small cities, as well as all the programmes of concerts given every year throughout the country, — my work would have expanded into a number of bulky volumes. But who would care to cope with such a leviathan compilation of small musical events?

Acknowledgment is due to Messrs. S. J. Johnson, Theodore Uhlig, A. Hoch, G. Bristow, Edward Schuberth, of New York; Prof. A. G. Emerick and Mr. Theodore Presser, of Philadelphia; Mr. F. H. Jenks, of Boston; Mr. Frederick Grant Gleason, of Chicago; and the editor of *Kunkel's Review*, of St. Louis. It is but right to say, however, that the philosophical and æsthetic conclusions based on the information for which I am indebted to them are my own.

FRÉDÉRIC LOUIS RITTER.

JANUARY, 1890.

PREFACE.

In July, 1838, "The Musical Review," a little weekly musical paper published in New York, issued the following circular: —

HISTORY OF MUSIC IN AMERICA.

We have been for some time engaged in collecting materials for a series of papers upon this subject, which are intended to embrace a general history of music in this country, from the settlement of Plymouth to the present time. Most of the facts which will be required to render our account complete must be derived from local records, and the communications of individuals, in different parts of the United States, who have given the subject consideration. Doubtless there are many who can render us important assistance in this undertaking, by forwarding all the information they may possess, which has any bearing upon the matter in question. We should be happy to receive, from our friends throughout the country, any particulars relating to music they may be able to furnish, — either statistical or anecdotical, — which will aid us in carrying out our plan. As soon as we shall have obtained all the necessary matter for this history, its publication in "The Review" will be commenced.

☞ Editors who may be disposed to further the object we have in view will confer a favor by noticing the above, or the substance of it, in their papers.

But, as the promised "History of Music in America" did not make its appearance, we may feel sure that the desired communications also failed to appear. After that time, two or

three other efforts were vainly made, by editors of American musical papers, to publish a history of music in America, based on communications to be forwarded by "individuals in different parts of the United States."

In 1875 I also issued a circular requesting musical societies, musicians, and musical amateurs to give me the benefit of their supposed collections of historical treasures relating to musical culture in the United States. I received many responses to my request, it is true; but they were all of such a nature that I found them useless for my proposed work. All were pre-eminently of an autobiographical character; in fact, they seemed to me capital material for the editing of a family directory of mediocre musicians, rather than that necessary for the partial foundation of the general musical history of a great nation. For example, one musician, unknown to fame, was not satisfied with expatiating on all the supposed important musical doings of himself and his ancestors, but also endeavored to impress upon my conscience, as a truthful historian, the great fact that his eldest son exhibited uncommon talent for musical composition, and that his little daughter showed unmistakable signs of becoming, at no distant future, one of the greatest American singers. And this obliging correspondent furthermore insinuated, that, if I failed to notice these facts, I should not do him justice.

The task of collecting all important matter relating to my subject has been an onerous one. I found the few sources existing to be difficult of access, and more often rendered obscure by superficial compilers. Most American writers on music have unfortunately accepted and copied any matter relative to music without the least critical consideration and

judgment. Things of very little significance in the life of art have been dwelt on and amplified with childish pedantry, while important matter has been ignored or misinterpreted. And then the practice, once so universal in American literary life, of copying some other author's ideas, and publishing them without giving credit to their originator, or naming the sources from which such matter was taken, frequently rendered it difficult for me to trace matters to right sources.

The only writer who ever seriously approached the subject in question was G. Hood, who, in 1846, published a "History of Music in New England." The little volume contains some useful matter regarding psalmody in the Colonies prior to the advent of W. Billings (as far as the book reaches), especially extracts from sermons and essays on psalmody by Puritan clergymen. But Hood's critical remarks must be accepted with extreme reserve, for his own standard as a practical musician was not a high one.

Of Gould's superficial compilation, "History of Church Music in America," I have spoken in Chapter IX. of this work.

A publication which, at the outset, promised some useful material and suggestions, was John W. Moore's "Encyclopædia of Music," first published in 1854. The editor of that compilation was connected with New-England musical affairs, especially psalmody, during all his life. He, at different times, edited musical papers. But I found in Moore's "Encyclopædia" little to further my plan. All I did find is duly credited in my book.

It has been my endeavor, in writing this book, to place before the American musical student and sincere musical amateur, a faithful mirror of past musical life in the United States,

to accentuate that which is in accordance with a true art spirit, or which promises to grow in the right direction, and bring forth good fruit; to expose to the strictures of impartial criticism that which is puerile, hollow, pretentious, fictitious, and a great hindrance to progress; to give their justly merited due to those musicians who, by means of great exertions in the interests of higher musical culture among the American people, deserve the grateful remembrance of the present, more musically advanced, generation; to dispel, as far as possible, the errors and false views still entertained in Europe regarding musical affairs in America.

Although real musical art culture is gaining a more solid basis here every year, yet some cities, and especially the rural districts, are still the fat pastures on which an army of musical charlatans, ignoramuses, and cunning adventurers feed, under the names of convention conductors, leaders, organizers, lecturers, teachers, performers, etc. This army still manages to levy a considerable tax on the purses of inexperienced country people. One assumes to teach musical composition in *ten* lessons: he sells his own concoctions, and succeeds in duping aspiring country pupils. Another peddles and tunes pianos, and unites with this high-art occupation that of piano-teacher. He advertises that he can teach anybody to play well on the piano in the short period of *four* weeks. Many of the present convention leaders act by turn, as the occasion requires, the part of psalm-tune singing teacher, or that of comic reciter. In a town not very distant from New York, at the closing "*Grand Concert*" of this season's "County Convention," the convention conductor also appeared as a soloist. His performances were not so much distinguished by fine vocal art as by

the ludicrous manner of acting his songs. He graphically illustrated a sea-ballad by imitating, with appropriate contortions, the waves of the stormy sea, the flashes of lightning, and the wrecking of the ship. He, of course, was encored, and then gave a recitation representing the character of a *villain*. In order to "make up," he first turned his back to the audience, and, facing his chorus, took a comb out of his pocket, combed his hair over his forehead, raised the collar of his coat, in order to look as villanous as possible, then turned towards the audience, and "brought the house down." I lately happened to be present at a camp-meeting when the convention hymn-tune-leader told his choir, between the singing of two hymns *à la* Moody and Sankey, that at a certain singing-meeting he once proposed a certain hymn-tune to be sung, but none of the congregation could remember it. He called on Brother This and Brother That, but all in vain. In this dilemma, he appealed to "Sister Ann," who rose, and — "Sister Ann struck oil!" triumphantly exclaimed the happy psalm-tune leader. It is more than a century since W. Billings labored in New England in the interest of psalmody. Though the musical tanner's tunes are almost all forgotten, the spirit of his method as a singing-school leader is still alive in many parts of this country.

I might have cited scores of occurrences similar to the above, in my book, not merely because they graphically illustrate the truths of history, — for only in America could they happen, — but also because they serve as strong contrasts to the earnest efforts of music students, the fine musical performances now taking place in large cities here; but I considered them too anecdotical in their nature. A general history must be, in a great measure, objective; and I therefore reserve all purely per-

sonal and subjective experiences for a future volume of a more autobiographical cast, in which I shall include my own immediate observations in such matters, artistic, social, collegiate, etc., which may serve to throw a still clearer light on American musical art-culture during the latter period of this century.

In the "Dictionary of American Music and Musicians," on which I am and have been for some time engaged, I shall mention those musicians whose labors have been chiefly of a local and restricted bearing, and whose names have therefore not called for special mention in the present work. To all those whose work has been of great general importance, I have endeavored to do impartial justice in my history; and this remark applies, as it should, to foreign as well as to native born American musicians.

For a more perfect understanding of the causes that influenced the beginning of American musical culture, I refer readers of the present book to my "Music in England." Strictly speaking, the two works complement each other.

The historical sketch of the opera in New Orleans (p. 154) was obligingly furnished me by Mr. J. T. Payne, through the kindness of G. W. Cable, the distinguished novelist.

Some of the information regarding the New-York Philharmonic Society (p. 263) was communicated to me by Mr. F. Rietzel, vice-president of the society.

The biographical sketch on p. 299 was communicated to me by Mr. Ed. Fry, brother of the composer.

Acknowledgment is due to Mr. Mendel, president of the Milwaukee Musik Verein, for some of the statistics concerning that society (p. 372).

FRÉDÉRIC LOUIS RITTER.

OCTOBER, 1883.

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MUSIC IN AMERICA

MUSIC IN AMERICA.

FIRST PERIOD, 1620–1771. — PURITAN PSALMODY.

CHAPTER I.

LOW STATE OF MUSICAL CULTURE.

THE first steps of American musical development may be traced back to the first establishment of English Puritan colonies in New England. Though English cavaliers appeared in Virginia fourteen years before the arrival of the "May Flower" at Plymouth Rock, bringing over the first colony of English Puritans, yet the cavaliers of Virginia, and their followers in South Carolina, exercised very little influence on American musical development. True, we shall see that English singers and musicians appeared early in the rising cities of Charleston, Richmond, and Baltimore, giving operatic performances, long before this was thought of in the New-England capital, Boston; yet it is a curious historical fact, that earnest interest in musical matters was first taken by the psalm-singing Puritans. From the crude form of a barbarously sung simple psalmody, there rose a musical culture in the United States which now excites the admiration of the art-lover, and at the

same time justifies the expectation and hope of a realization, at some future epoch, of an American school of music.

As we have seen in a former chapter, at the time of the great revolution in England, the Puritans destroyed organs, music-books, dissolved church-choirs, and chased musicians from the organ-gallery. The art of singing the psalm-tunes in the fine arrangements of Ravenscroft, and other clever English contrapuntists, was abandoned because it reminded people of music, the frivolous art; and the tune in its melodic simplicity only was allowed to be sung by the whole congregation. Thus music with the Puritans became a kind of sacred people's-song. The Puritan psalmody differed, however, from the true people's-song in so far as it was not the product of the people's invention, a spontaneous expression of the people's emotion, but a conventional adaptation of tunes already in existence; for the Puritans discouraged, nay, peremptorily prohibited, all endeavors to invent new tunes. Thus the mind of the people gradually became unaccustomed to the use of the difficult and delicate material of a mysterious art. The Puritan having been taught to look upon music as a frivolous product, fashioned by the evil designs of the Tempter (the Antichrist), he naturally shrank back with horror from an artistic occupation that might bring upon his soul everlasting punishment after death. The adaptation of a few simple harmless psalm-tunes caused him much religious scruple; and these were only accepted, when, on the strength of different passages of the Bible, the clergy proved that singing of psalms was agreeable to, and even commended by, the Almighty Father.

[1] See Music in England.

"The Puritan [says Palfrey[1]] was a scripturist, — a scripturist with all his heart, if, as yet, with imperfect intelligence. Romanism he detested as a fiction of human contrivance. In extreme opposition to it, he cherished the scheme of looking to the Word of God as his sole and universal directory. That Word had been but lately made common property by the Reformation. The preparation for interpreting it possessed by the best scholars of the day was inadequate, and the judicious application of such learning as existed was disturbed by the rashness of enthusiasm and novelty. The Puritan searched the Bible not only for principles and rules, but for mandates, — and, when he could find none of these, for analogies, — to guide him in precise arrangements of public administration and in the minutest points of individual conduct. By it he settled cases of conscience, and in his casuistry his learning and ingenuity were largely employed."

Under the reign of Henry VIII., Queen Elizabeth and James I., music, both sacred and secular, was diligently and earnestly cultivated in England; and masters like Tallis, Byrd, Dowland, Morley, Orlando Gibbons, created works that could hold their own beside the labors of their neighbors the Gallo-Belgian contrapuntists. With the temporary supremancy of Puritan religious influence in Great Britain all serious musical culture vanished as by magic; and from that time on the English people, though apparently lovers of music, did not succeed in regaining, in a broad sense, the title of a musical people endowed with the faculty of original inventiveness. Is this to be considered as a misfortune for that great nation? Directly not. But judging by the great exertions the English of our day are making in order to fill up that gap in their artistic development, the readiness with which they have claimed the immortal composer of the "Messiah" as one of their

[1] History of New England.

own, the vast sums they spend on foreign artists in the concert-room or in the Italian opera, we are justified in assuming that they deeply regret having so cruelly been deprived, through the untimely fanaticism of a strict religious sect, of the æsthetic influence of a cheerful and ennobling art-culture, which, judging by its former development in England, would no doubt have proved rich in artistic results by this time.

The Puritans, who landed in 1620 at Plymouth Rock, brought with them their psalm-tunes and their hatred of secular music. The version of the psalter which the colonists brought over, and used at first in their worship, was that made by Henry Ainsworth of Amsterdam. It continued to guide the devotion of Plymouth for seventy years, and that of Salem for forty. The version of Sternhold and Hopkins, however, appears to have been the book first used in Ipswich, and perhaps in some other places. In most of the churches both were superseded in 1640 by the "Bay Psalm-Book." It was issued from the press of Cambridge in that year, the second book printed in British America, and was as well received as any ever published there; for it went through seventy editions. The "Bay Psalm-Book" was prepared by some New-England divines, of whom three were Welde, Eliot of Roxbury, and Mather of Dorchester.

In the Ainsworth version the melodies were placed over the psalms, and printed in the lozenge, or diamond-shaped note, without bars, in the manner of the psalm-melodies of the reformed Psalter of the Genevan church. Among the early settlers of the Colonies, as among the Dissenters in England, there existed much difference of opinion regarding the manner of singing

in church. Some maintained that Christians should not sing at all, but only "make melody in their hearts." Others did not object to singing, but thought it wrong to sing the psalms. Some would only allow Christians to sing, while the assembly should join in silence, and respond "Amen." The Rev. John Cotton, apparently an ardent advocate of singing in church, published, in 1647, a tract, by means of which he endeavored to remove some of the existing prejudices against singing. Palfrey[1] says of John Cotton, —

"In all its generations of worth and refinement, Boston has never seen an assembly more illustrious for generous qualities, or for manly culture, than when the magistrature of the young colony welcomed Cotton and his fellow-voyagers at Winthrop's table. . . . The son of a barrister in easy circumstances, he had been successively an undergraduate of Trinity College, and a Fellow and tutor at Emanuel College, in the University of Cambridge, where he had acquired a distinguished reputation for ability and learning. In Boston his professional labors had been of astonishing amount, and the sanctity and mingled force and amiableness of his character had won for him a vast influence."

The title of the above-mentioned tract was "Singing of Psalms a Gospel ordinance, or a Treatise wherein are handled these four Particulars. I. Touching the duty itself. II. Touching the matter to be sung. III. Touching the singers. IV. Touching the manner of singing."[2] I have only space to give a few short quotations from the tract: —

"For the first Question we lay downe this conclusion for a Doctrine of Truth: That singing of Psalms with a lively voyce, is an holy duty of God's worship now in the day of the New Testament. When we say, singing with lively voyce, we suppose none will so

[1] Work quoted, i. 368. [2] See Hood, History of Music in New England, p. 35.

farre misconstrue us as to thinke we exclude singing with the heart: for God is a Spirit: and to worship him with the voyce without the spirit, were but lip-labour: which (being rested in) is but lost labour, or at most profitted but little. Concerning the second Question we hold and believe that not only the psalms of David, but any other spirituall song recorded in the Scripture, may lawfully be sung in Christian Churches. 2d We grant also that any private Christian, who hath a gifte to frame a spirituall song, may both frame it, and sing it privately, for his own private comfort, and remembrance of some speciall benefit or deliverance. Nor do we forbid the private use of any instrument of Musick therewithall: so that attention to the instrument does not divert the heart from attention of the matter of song."

Touching the third point, whether one or all should sing, Cotton argued that all should sing, with liberty for one to sing a psalm written by himself, while the church should respond "Amen."

"Whether women may sing as well as men: For in this point there be some that deale with us, as Pharaoh delt with the Israelites, who though he was at first utterly unwilling that any should goe to sacrifice to the Lord in the Wilderness, yet being at length convinced that they must goe, than he was content that the men should goe, but not the women. So here, some that were altogether against singing of Psalms at all with lively voyce, yet being convinced that it is a morall worship of God warranted in Scripture, then if there must be a Singing, one alone must sing, not all (or if all), the men only, and not the women. And their reason is: Because it is not permitted to a woman to speake in the Church, how then shall they sing? Much less is it permitted to them to prophecy in the Church. And singing the Psalms is a kind of Prophecying."

These are the principal points that interest us here.

John Cotton's tract, no doubt, opened the doors to musical culture in New England, not alone in the church, but also in private life. Though he could not convince all the members of the church that singing is a harm-

less and beautiful occupation, yet many began to share his opinions regarding sacred music.

The manner of public worship among the first settlers was the following: —

"Every Sabbath, or Lord's Day, they come together at Boston by ringing of a bell about nine of the clock, or before. The pastor begins with solemn prayer, continuing about a quarter of an hour. The teacher then readeth and expoundeth a chapter. Then a psalm is sung, whichever one of the elders dictates. After that the pastor preacheth a sermon, and sometimes extempore exhorts. Then the teacher concludes with prayer and blessing." [1]

The first colonists who embarked from Leyden seemed not to have been without a certain degree of musical taste; for, says Mr. Winslow, —

"We refreshed ourselves with singing of psalms, making joyful melody in our hearts as well as with the voice, there being many of our congregation very expert in music, and indeed it was the sweetest music that mine ears ever heard."

But in their new homes, where all kinds of care for mere existence, and numerous other troubles, visited those early colonists, they found no time to keep up their scant knowledge of music; and their children grew up without even learning how to sing the simplest melody by note. Many of the psalm-tunes sung by the Pilgrim Fathers sank into oblivion; and it is said, that for eighty or ninety years not more than ten different tunes, if so many, were used in public worship. Few congregations could sing more than the five tunes known by the names of "York," "Hackney," "Windsor," St. Mary's," and "Martyrs." From the great antipathy most of the Puritan congregations entertained

[1] From a London account in the year 1641.

towards singing and music in general, it is not to be wondered at that their style of singing those few psalm-tunes was of an inferior character, giving little edification to a refined ear; and, for want of a proper supply of new tunes, church-music gradually reached a condition of dulness and monotony. Under these circumstances men of inborn artistic sensibility and refinement, as were many among the clergy, must have greatly preferred to let their congregations "make silently melody in their hearts," instead of with the voice "squeaking above or grumbling below."

"The few music-books [says Hood[1]] that had from time to time found their way into the Colonies were rapidly decreasing, and the few they had were unlike each other. The cultivation of music was neglected; and, until in the latter part of the seventeenth, and the commencement of the eighteenth, centuries, the congregations throughout New England were rarely able to sing more than three or four tunes. The knowledge and use of notes, too, had so long been neglected, that the few melodies sung became corrupted, until no two individuals sang them alike."[2]

Thus musical culture stood, during the first epoch of the Colonies, on as low a degree as it held among the Gauls and the Alemanni in the seventh century, of whom it was said, that "their rough voices, roaring like thunder, are not capable of soft modulation. Indeed their voices give out tones similar to the rumbling of a baggage-wagon rolling down from a height; and instead of touching the hearts of the hearers they only fill them with aversion."[3] If at this epoch all the Puritan clergymen had been of the same adverse opinion regarding music, and had they insisted on the banishment of

[1] Work quoted.

[2] See also Walter; and Symmes, p. 13 of this work.

[3] See Ritter's History of Music, 2d ed., p. 34.

singing from the Church, their purpose could have been easily accomplished, since musical practice stood at so low an ebb. But many among the clergy and teachers having been men of some degree of naturally refined taste, and being at the same time anxious to uphold in due reverence a religious practice so pure and ennobling, they greatly deplored the degradation into which the singing of psalms and other spiritual songs had sunk in the churches of the Colonies. They were generally men who had been trained in the best learning of the time, as well as educated for vigorous action in the stern school of those persecutions which had driven them from their homes. As many as half of the number are known to have been graduates of Oxford or Cambridge, the greater part of the latter university. From the pulpit they earnestly exhorted the congregations to pay better attention to a more appropriate musical singing of the sacred melodies. They proved, like their English *confrères*,[1] by many quotations from the Bible, that singing in church is a Christian duty, agreeable to God; and that in a civilized Christian congregation it is out of place to call singing that which more resembles the noises and roaring of savages. Among those eminent clergymen who zealously worked for a reformation of this important and beautiful part of religious service we find Mather, Edwards, Symmes, Dwight, Wise, Eliot, Walter, Stoddard, Prince; but their best efforts found great opposition among a large part of the congregations. Many objections were raised against the learning of singing by notes. In 1723 several clergymen published a tract entitled, "Cases of Conscience about singing Psalms, briefly considered and

[1] See chapter on Psalmody in Music in England.

resolved."[1] In this we find among others the following propositions:—

"Whether you do believe that singing Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, is an external part of Divine Worship, to be observed in, and by the assembly of God's people on the Lord's Days, as well as on other occasional meetings of the Saints, for the worshipping of God.

"Whether you do believe that singing in the worship of God ought to be done skilfully?

"Whether you do believe that skilfulness in singing may ordinarily be gained in the use of outward means by the blessing of God.

"Is it possible for Fathers of forty years old and upward to learn to sing by rule. And ought they to attempt at this age to learn?

"Do you believe that it is Lawful and Laudable for us to change the customary way of singing the psalms?

"Whether they who purposely sing a tune different from that which is appointed by the pastor, or elder to be sung, are not guilty of acting disorderly, and of taking God's name in vain also, by disturbing the order of the sanctuary."

These "Cases of Conscience" will give an idea of the great importance which the question of church-music reached among the New-England congregations; and, if the clergymen thought it necessary to put among those "Cases" the proposition whether "Fathers of forty years old and upward" ought to learn to sing by rule, we may imagine how urgently they wished for reform in singing the psalms.[2] The people of the congregations became deeply excited over this question of skilfully singing in church; and the "Fathers of forty years old and upward," although they had been assured by the framers of the "Cases of Conscience" that their attempt to try to learn to sing by rule would prove successful, would, no doubt, have preferred to see regular

[1] Hood, p. 87.

[2] Here was a field for the Tonic-sol-fa-ers!

singing banished from all Christendom, than to sit down at their age, and learn to master the rules of skilful singing. The excitement took a formidable proportion, and lasted several years. Some members of the congregations took sides with the pastors who advocated a more musical way of singing the psalms; others remained hostile to what they considered a frivolous musical practice. A fierce battle of "Arguments and Objections" raged between the advocates of decent singing and those of the "usual way." Some of the first ministers of the gospel published spirited discourses on those hotly contested questions of psalm-singing. So the Rev. Thomas Symmes of Bradford, Mass., a man of talent, of great influence, and excellent character, published, in 1720, "The Reasonableness of Regular Singing or Singing by Note," "in an Essay to revive the true and ancient mode of singing psalm-tunes according to the pattern of our New-England psalm-books, the knowledge and practice of which is greatly decayed in most congregations. Writ by a Minister of the Gospel. Perused by several ministers in the town and the country; and published with the approbation of all who have read it."

Here are a few extracts from the above essay:[1] —

"The total neglect of singing psalms by many serious Christians for want of skill in singing psalm-tunes. There are many who never employ their tongues in singing God's praises, because they have no skill. It is with great difficulty that this part of worship is performed, and with great indecency in some congregations for want of skill; it is to be feared singing must be wholly omitted in some places for want of skill if this art is not revived. I was present in a congregation, when singing was for a whole

[1] See Hood.

Sabbath omitted, for want of a man able to lead the assembly in singing.[1] . . .

"The declining from, and getting beside the rule was gradual and insensible. — Singing schools and singing books being laid aside, there was no way to learn; but only by hearing of tunes sung, or by taking the run of the tunes, as it is phrased. The rules of singing not being taught or learnt, every one sang as best pleased himself, and every leading-singer would take the liberty to raise any note of the tune, or lower it, as best pleased his ear; and add such turns and flourishes as were grateful to him; and this was done so gradually, as that but few if any took notice of it. One Clerk or Chorister would alter the tunes a little in his day, the next a little in his, and so one after another, till in fifty or sixty years it caused a considerable alteration."

In 1723 Symmes published another essay on the above subject: "Utile Dulci. Or a Joco-Serious Dialogue, Concerning Regular Singing: Calculated for a Particular Town (where it was publickly had on Friday, Oct. 12, 1722) but may serve some other Places in the same Climate."

The following mottoes on the title-page are taken from Playford's "Introduction to the Skill of Musick:" —

"Of all Beasts, there is none [saith Ælianus] that is not delighted with Harmony, but only the Ass."

"No Science but Musick may enter the door of the Church." — VENERABLE BEDE.

This essay presents many interesting historical points regarding musical culture at this epoch in New England. It is a sort of summing-up of all that the Rev. Mr. Symmes advocated in his previous essays, and sundry sermons he preached on the subject of psalm-singing. It is also another protest against —

"The opposition made in too many Towns to the *Reformation*

[1] See p. 10.

of our Psalmody, notwithstanding all that has been done to show the Reasonableness, Advantage, and Necessity of it. And this brings me to say, That I have us'd my best endeavours, according to the measure God has given me, to prevent the rise and afterwards the progress of such an unhappy Controversy in *this place*, yet there has been a great deal of Contention and Uneasiness amongst us, about the Singing by Rule, and I perceive there are some yet dissatisfyed.

"Now, it being my purpose to encourage Singing meetings in the Town in the long Winter Evenings, I tho't it prudence to make another Essay introductory to my setting forward such a *Laudable Practice*, that if it be possible I might ease the Minds of all amongst us, that remain dissatisfy'd on this score: And agreeably, I projected to draw up in Form an Answer to all Objections, I could remember to have heard about this Matter."

These objections against regular singing our author divides in two parts: —

"First, some against the thing itself; and they are seven. 1. That it is a *new way*, an *unknown tongue*. 2. That it is not so *melodious* as the *usual way*. 3. That there are too *many tunes*, we shall never have done learning. 4. That the practice of it *gives disturbance;* rails and exasperates men's spirits; grieves sundry people, and causes them to behave themselves indecently and disorderly. 5. That it is *Quakerish* and *Popish*, and introductive of *instrumental* musick. 6. That the *names* given to the notes are *bawdy*, yea *blasphemous*. 7. That it is a *needless way*, since their good Fathers that were strangers to it, are got to heaven without it.

"Secondly, some are against the *persons* that are the promoters, admirers and practitioners of this way. And there are three. 1. It is said to be a *contrivance* to get *money*. 2. They spend *too much* time about learning, they tarry out a nights disorderly, and family-religion is neglected by the means. 3. They are a company of *young upstarts* that fall in with this way and set it forward: and some of them are *lewd* and *loose persons*."

Regarding the first objection, the writer says, —

"This you call a *New-Way*, was study'd, known and approv'd of in our College, from the very foundation of it; (and tho' for some years of later times it was unhappily neglected, yet (blessed be God) it is again revived, and I hope will be ever continued in that School of Prophets. And besides, that it is there observed that the notes of the tunes were placed in our New-England Psalmbook from the beginning with general directions for Singing by Note; and that there are many of the Children, and Grand-Children of the first settlers of New-England, who are now living, that well remember their ancestors' singing by note, I say, besides all this, it's evident, that singing by note is no novelty, since Musick is one of the liberal sciences (or, as Alsted admits it, a mathematical science subalternate to Arithmetick, and may be called a special Arithmetick), has been so accounted in all ages and amongst all learned Nations.

"Moreover, the very tunes prick'd in our Psalmbooks, are with little or no variation in Mr. Ravenscroft's Psalmbook, printed above a Hundred years ago, in one of which, there's an account of the gentlemen's names that made our tunes.[1]

"Further more, (as it is evident from a Psalm-book of Elder Chipman's, now in my hands) the Church of Plymouth (which was the first Church in New-England) made use of Ainsworth's version of the Psalms till the year 1692. For altho' our New England version of the Psalms was composed by sundry hands, and completed by President Dunster, about the year 1640; yet that Church did not use it, it seems till about two and fifty years after, but stuck to Ainsworth; and till about 1682, their excellent custom was to sing without reading the line.[2] Now, in Ainsworth's Psalmbook, there are about 44 tunes, and but 4 of them that I ever saw (to my knowledge) anywhere, save in that Psalmbook: And there the time prick'd, as in Ravenscroft's and Playford's at the beginning of the Psalm; or you there find a reference to the time the Psalm is to be sung in, so that all the chief musician or chorister had to do, was to give the pitch and lead the tune, and all were to sing according to the notes in the Psalmbook.

"That what is now called the *Usual way*, in opposition to sing-

[1] The Rev. Th. Symmes was mistaken. The musicians named in Ravenscroft's Psalter arranged the tunes in four parts, but did not compose them.

[2] Lining-out the Psalm, see p. 51.

ing by note, is but a defective imitation of the *regular way*. . . . Your usual way of singing is but of yesterday, an upstart novelty, a deviation from the regular, which is the only scriptural good old way of singing; much older than our fathers or fathers' grandfathers.

"The beauty and harmony of singing consists very much in a just timing and turning the notes; every singer keeping the exact pitch the tune is set in, according to the part he sings. Now you may remember, that in our congregation we us'd frequently to have some people singing a note or two, after the rest had done. And you commonly strike the notes not together, but one after another, one being half way thro' the second note, before his neighbor has done with the first. Now this is just as melodious to a well-tuned musical ear, as Æsop was beautiful to a curious eye.

"As to the multiplicity of tunes, there has hitherto but five been sung in our Congregation, more than were wont to be sung. And as to one of them: viz. *Hackney* or *St. Mary's*, it has been pricked in one edition of our Psalmbook over this 30 years. As to *Standish*, it has been sung for many years (as I am informed) in the church of N. Hampton. As to *Durhead* or *Brunswick*, it's King George's tune (it's said), and I hope none but the Pretender's followers will speak against that. As to the *85 Psalmtune;* there is no other, in which the first metre of that Psalm in our version can be sung with decorum, and surely our fathers inserted that metre to be sung. As for *London New*, it was sung at the publick election, incomparably well, and to good acceptance above a year ago. It's strange that people that are so set against stated forms of prayer, should be so fond of singing half a dozen tunes, nay one tune from Sabbath to Sabbath; till every body nauseates it, that has any relish of singing. . . .

"Since you make a noise (tho' no pleasant one) about instrumental musick, I'll give you an unanswerable argument, that may put you out of all pain about it: And that is, that, truly, it's too chargeable a piece of worship ever to obtain amongst us; and you may depend upon it, that such as are not willing to be at the cost of a bell, to call the people together on the Lord's day, and of a man to ring it (as it is with too many amongst us) will never be so extravagant as to lay out their cash, (especially, now money is so

scarce) to buy organs, and pay an artist for playing on them. . . . But yet, I'll tell you for your own comfort, when people grow so extream flush of their money, and so wilful as to lay it out upon organs (if you and I live to that day) I can help you to several arguments, that some eminent divines have invented against instrumental musick, in divine worship. And in the mean time, pray be easy, and assure yourself, that singing by Rule, wont in our day, introduce instrumental musick, much less Quakerism and Popery. I promise you, your usual way of singing would much sooner dispose me to fall into them. Because the Quakers don't sing at all, and I should be out of the noise of it; and the Papists sing much better when they sing by Rule.

"As to getting money by it — why the singing master is not worthy of his reward for his pains in teaching our children to sing, as well as the School Dame or school master for teaching our children to read, write and cypher, I can't device. For Musick is as real and lawful and ingenious an art as either of the others. I don't say indeed as useful and necessary.

"As to the prophaness in singing psalm tunes in barns and fields — this Objection arises from a superstitious notion, some have imbibed, that there is some sacredness in tunes.[1] But I assure you and can easily demonstrate to you, there is not the lest Jot. If any would suppose there's a relative holiness in the most celebrated psalm-tune, I affirm, there is no more real holiness in the most celebrated psalm-tune, than in the tune of "Pepper is Black." And if people have taken up any other notion, it is high time they should be better informed, and converted of this error. Psalm-tunes and song-tunes are all made by some rule: and those that made the psalm tunes were not divinely inspired; nor had they any authority to consecrate any tune to the worship of God. . . . And further I affirm, the most of the psalm tunes as sung in the usual way, are much more like song-tunes, than as sung by rule; because you have more supernumerary notes and turnings of the voice in your way, than in ours. An ingenious gentleman, who has prick'd Canterbury as some of you sing it, finds no less than 150 notes, in that tune, in your way, whereas in ours there are but 30."

[1] The American Puritans took off their hats, anywhere, in the fields or in the streets, whenever a psalm-tune was sung.

In addition to the above enthusiastic and energetic defence of "decent singing" during divine service, as put forward so intelligently by the Rev. Th. Symmes, I will give the greater part of an essay by John Eliot, son of J. Eliot, the famous Indian Apostle, who taught his Indian congregations to sing psalms so well. ("The whole congregation of Indians praise God with singing, in which many of them are excelling," says a letter written at this time.) Eliot, Jr., was an ardent advocate of singing; and as the essay is now so scarce, and at the same time presents the subject in so reasonable and acceptable a light, it will no doubt be perused with interest and advantage by my readers.

The title of the essay is "A Brief Discourse Concerning Regular Singing, shewing from the Scriptures, the Necessity and Incumbency thereof in the Worship of God. Boston, N. England. Printed by B. Green, Jun., for John Eliot, at his shop at the South End of the Town, 1725." According to the preface, this "Discourse" was written Jan. 23, 1722–23.

"The great Obstruction [says Eliot in the preface] that regular Singing has of late met with from a great number of persons, who being ignorant of the use and excellency thereof, vehemently decry it, and violently oppose it; (from whence has ensued great contention and discord among us); has occasioned the following discourse; which is only the fruit of a few spare hours. Since the writing thereof, I have seen several tracts about singing viz., The Accomplished Singer [Cotton Mather's tract]: The sweet Psalmist of Israel; and A Discourse about the Reasonableness of Regular singing [Th. Symmes's essay]: which I had never seen before. These being made by men of great learning, may seem to render the ensuing Discourse useless; but being vastly inferior to them, yet being on a something different subject, and showing the necessity of regular singing in the Worship of God: I know not but it may be of some use to the unlearned (to

whom it is designed), for moon-light is serviceable to those that are benighted. If it may be of service to enlighten those that thro' ignorance decry all rule, and applaud singing by rote as the good old way; and if it may help to reconcile differing minds, and for future prevent disorder in the worship of God, God will herein be glorified, and my end will be obtained."

The "Discourse" opens with a text, — 1 Chron. xv. 22: "He instructed about the song, because he was skilful."

"That singing of psalms is a part of divine worship, to be performed by the people of God, in their public assemblies (not excluding singing in private) where they meet to worship him, is a truth generally received, and the practice of the reformed churches makes it fully evident. This is not only a modern practice, but was in use among the people of God in elder ages, as is evident, the worship of God, both in the time of the old testament dispensation, and the new, was not performed without it. . . . Relating to the text arises this doctrinal truth.

"*Doct.* — That to the right or regular preformance of the duty of singing psalms, in the publick worship of God, good skill is necessary, and required in (at least some of) them that perform it.

"I say some of them. All are not capable to lead herein. It cannot be expected that whole congregations should be skillful; but it is necessary that there be some and such a number (at least) as may govern the psalmody, and be a sufficient guide to the unskillful that the service may be regular, and becoming so sacred an exercise and a pleasing offering to the God of order, who requires as in 1. Cor. 14, ult. Let all things be done in order."

"These are:

"By skill here is intended knowledge of, and ability to manage the tunes, in which the psalms are to be sung according to the rules thereof; so as there may be concord, harmony and good melody therein. . . . Every pleasant noise or voice is not singing in this sense. . . . In this, knowledge (of making sweet melody), is more particular implyed or included.

"*First.* An acquaintance with the rules of musick, the different keys and the various times, notes, sounds therein; the chords, the

discords how to rise and fall gradually, or pass from chord to chord in an agreeable manner, how to keep time, and to make proper closes, and the like.

"*Secondly.* A musical ear, or an ability to distinguish between the different sounds in musick: A quick perception of what is disagreeable, jarring and unmusical. This the unskillful discern not, and therefore it is that they are so in love with; they ignorantly call the *Good old way*, and even idolize it, while they reject and decry the *real good old way* and order.

"*Thirdly.* A tuneable voice, which may be managed in an agreeable manner by the direction of the notes, to the making good musick or melody. This to some is in a manner natural; while others acquire it with great pains and diligence in practice, but is necessary to that skill we are speaking of. . . . Knowledge of the rules and the notes and characters of musick will not render a man skillful, except he can govern his voice to make agreeable sounds. Good knowledge of rules with an agreeable dexterity for practicing them makes an artist, and such as have attained these may be said to be skillful indeed. . . .

"Now when men are void of skill herein, and unacquainted with the rules thereof, it is impossible they should agree to make one sound, or an even sound; which is made by rising and falling of the voice coincidentally and in union altogether, and duly keeping time, in prolation of voice by which means a whole congregation may be said to make but one sound. Where there is no rule, men's fancies (by which they are govern'd) are various; some affect a quavering flourish on one note, and others upon another which (because they are ignorant of true musick or melody) they account a grace to the tune; and while some affect a quicker motion, others affect a slower and drawl out their notes beyond all reason; hence in congregations ensue jarrs and discords, which make singing rather resemble howling, and this drawing out the notes to such a length is the occasion of their tittering up and down, as if the tunes were all composed of quavers, and make 'em resemble tunes to dance to. *Further*, the want of rule and skill is the reason why every congregation almost has a different way of singing. So that when persons are occasionally abroad, and joyn with a neighbouring congregation in the worship of God, they are often uncapable of singing with them. Thus 'tis often at

lectures, and especially at ordinations, where people of many congregations meet together, their ways of singing are so different that 'tis not easy to know what tune is sung, and in reality there is none. 'Tis rather Jumble and confusion. Altho' they all, doubtless, intend some tune or other, and it may be, the same, yet they differ almost as much as if every one sang a different tune. This I have often observed, all which is owing to the want of knowledge of the rules of singing and of skill to improve and manage them. . . .

"I shall endeavour to answer a few Objections against regular singing.

"OBJECT. 1. Some have objected, that in the church of Israel instrumental musick much was in use, which required skill and art, but in our vocal singing there is not the like necessity.

"To which I answer.

"1. 'Tis easier by the practice to order and govern an instrument, according to the notes, than 'tis for the most of men to modulate their voices; which makes Practice in voice as necessary as in instrumental musick.

"2. In the church of Israel, vocal musick was in use, as well as instrumental, else to what end were the psalms metrically composed, which are divine songs: The title of one being 'To the chief musician, a psalm song,' and others of like import: And they were sung by David, and others of the people of God. And instruments could not articulate the sounds of the words of the psalmist.

"OBJECT. 2. If the tunes (as the psalms are) were of divine inspiration, and had we the Hebrew tunes; then it were reasonable to conform to them and endeavour after Skill; but since we have not those, we have no rule at all: nor do we see rule necessary.

. . . "This is no just bar to our way of regular singing, or a just objection against our tunes, or the skill of our composers, or masters of musick. If the Hebrew tunes had been necessary for us, they would, no doubt, have been preserved, with the psalms for our use; but the Hebrew metres differ from the metres of other languages, which make it inconvenient for us to use their tunes, if we had them. . . . And when the psalms were first translated into English fit to be sung, persons of skill in musick composed tunes to fit the version; some of which tunes are affixed to our

psalm books, and the singing of them according to the notes, in our psalm books, is by some commonly called the new way of singing.

"OBJ. 3. This way of singing, seems to be derived from the French, and looks like popery; and it seems to be introductory thereinto.

. . . . . .

"OBJ. 4. Is against the tone used in singing by rule; and the particular syllables Mi, fa, sol, la, used in learning; some calling it a Negro Tone, others a squeaking tone, unbecoming the worship of God.

. . . . . .

"OBJ. 5. The Apostle directs us to make melody in our hearts to the Lord, and to sing with grace in our hearts etc., and this is sufficient whether we regard rule or no, as to the external part.

. . . . . .

A LAMENTATION.

"That musick, which in itself is concord, harmony, melody, sweetness, charming even to irrational creatures; cheers the spirits of men, and tends to raise them in devotion, and in the praises of God, and was instituted by God as a means of divine worship, which is a terrour to evil spirits, the delight of the holy Angels, and will be everlasting imployment of those Seraphim and the glory-fied Saints, should be an occasion of strife, debate, discord, contention, quarelling and all manner of disorder. That men, the only creatures in the lower creation, that are accomplished with reason and apt organs to praise God with should improve them so to dishonour him; and that instead of an angelick temper in man, which they are capable of, and is required of them, and especially in this matter; there should be rather a cynick disposition and an improvement of such noble Organ to bark, snarl at, and bite one another, that instead of one heart and one voice in the praises of our Glorious Creator and most bountiful Benefactor; there should be only jangle, discord and sluring and reviling one another; etc., this is, and shall be for a lamentation."

The "Discourse" closes with the following exhortation:—

"Whatever our thoughts are as to the mode or vocal part, whether the *old*, or the *new way* (as it is called) be most pleasing to us, it would be our wisdom and a manifestation of our christianity to deny ourselves, and our own obstinate wills, which are apparently the chief cause of our contention in these things, and condescend (at least) so far one to the other, as to keep time i.e. to begin and end the lines alltogether, which if we did, there would not in most of the tunes commonly sung, be so wide a difference as is by some imagined, many of the lines being near alike; if we all sincerely endeavour to exercise grace in Singing, and to perform the vocal part in the best manner we could, our services would be accepted of God. And I doubt not but regular singing would have a better relish with the most of our people, and be comply'd with, and so our differences would end in a good and lasting union, and our jars and discords in a sweet and delightful concord and harmony. So let it be: Amen."

From these extracts from Th. Symmes and John Eliot's essays my readers may better judge of the confused and excited state of affairs this vexed question of "Regular Singing" of the psalm-tunes had created among the congregations of New England. On the side of the clergy we find an ardent desire for a needed reform in matters of church-music; on the side of the congregations an obstinate resistance to all endeavors to change the "old traditional way" of singing as every one pleased. Though the ministers of the gospel found it advisable to preach and print and circulate pacificatory discourses,[1] in order to soothe and calm the commotion which this matter of psalm-singing had conjured up in the mind of the colonists, yet they never rested until they had done all in their power in order to plan a reform. They urged as the most efficacious means for such a desirable end the establishment of

[1] "A Pacificatory Letter," published Dec. 23, 1723, of which Hood gives some extracts.

singing-schools, where the young people of the congregations (in spite of those curious objections mentioned above) could learn to sing by note. Says the Rev. Th. Symmes on this subject, —

"Would it not greatly tend to promote singing of psalms if singing schools were promoted? Would not this be a conforming to *scripture pattern?* Have we not as much need of them as God's people of old? Have we any reason to expect to be inspired with the gift of singing, any more than that of *reading?* Or to attain it without suitable means, any more than they of old, when *miracles*, *inspirations*, etc., were common? Where would be the *difficulty*, or what the disadvantages, if people who want skill in singing, would procure a skillful person to instruct them, and meet two or three evenings in the week, from *five* or *six* o'clock to *eight*, and spend the time in learning to sing? Would not this be an innocent and profitable *recreation*, and would it not have a tendency, if prudently managed, to prevent the unprofitable expense of time on other occasions? Has it not a tendency to divert young people, who are most proper to learn, from learning *idle*, *foolish*, yea, *pernicious songs* and *ballads*, and banish all such *trash* from their minds? Experience proves this. Would it not be proper for *school masters* in *country parishes* to teach their *scholars?* Are not they very unwise who plead against learning to sing by rule, when they can't learn to sing at all, unless they learn by rule? Has not the grand enemy of souls a hand in this who prejudices them against the best means of singing?

"Will it not be very servisible in ministers to encourage their people to learn to sing? Are they not under some obligations by virtue of their office so to do? Would there not, at least in some places, appear more of that fear of man, which brings a snare, than of true christian prudence in omitting this? And as circumstances may allow, would it not be very useful and profitable if such ministers as are capable, would instruct their people in this art?"

These words by Th. Symmes, who, during this excited period, proved himself to be one of the most enthusiastic and earnest advocates of "decent sing-

ing" during divine worship, were the most sensible and practical counsels then given, and have, up to our time, not yet lost their intrinsic truth. He puts the whole importance of the question of church-music on the two cardinal points within the congregation; viz., "Teach the young people to learn to sing by notes, and the clergy to take a truly genuine interest in this important side of church-service, and even, if able, to instruct their people in this art." Had these two duties been carefully and unceasingly carried out by church congregations and their pastors, the so much talked and written about reform of church-music would have regulated itself in proportion to the improvement in experience and taste.

CHAPTER II.

DAWN OF MUSICAL CULTIVATION, EARLY REPRINTS AND COMPILATIONS OF ENGLISH PSALM-BOOKS.

The Rev. Th. Symmes's advice — to form singing-societies, in order to obviate the bad taste prevalent in singing psalm-tunes — was followed up; and, after about 1720, singing societies were established in different parts of New England. Though these societies were ostensibly at first established for the cultivation and improval of the style of church-music, yet they were at the same time the means of diffusing musical knowledge among their members; and so, gradually, a love for music was awakened in many families who then enjoyed greater prosperity. This change in favor of a more liberal practice of, and a better taste for, music among the New-England Puritans was, no doubt, in a certain measure also brought on by many new emigrants from England, where, after the Great Rebellion, music had again been diligently and successfully cultivated. And we have seen, in the preceding chapter, that many of the best and most influential men among the American clergy fearlessly and zealously advocated a more musical manner of singing in church. They felt the spiritual power of noble sacred song: they naturally claimed it as an edifying helpmate of their ministry to the spiritual wants of their congregations. They regulated, as

far as their means would allow, a better manner of singing. And many churches, following the good advice of their pastors, began to introduce salutary reforms in the musical part of religious worship; and some of the first of these churches were those of Boston, Cambridge, Roxbury, Bridgewater, Dorchester, Charlestown, Ipswich, Newbury, Andover, and Bradford.

Mr. Hood,[1] and, after him, several other American writers, said that Ravenscroft's Psalter had been used in the Colonies since the arrival of the first settlers. "The music (in their psalm-books) was principally taken," said Hood, "from Ravenscroft's collection with little or no alteration; and this was used nearly for one hundred years." And in a note Hood said that "this collection had been published in England in 1618, two years before the Pilgrims came to this country." Hood most likely made this assertion on the strength of Th. Symmes's remark in his Dialogue (see preceding chapter): "The very tunes pricked in our psalmbooks, are with little or no variation in Mr. Ravenscroft's Psalmbook, printed above a Hundred years." On what authority Hood accepted 1618 as the date of the first edition of Ravenscroft's Psalm-Book, I do not know: the oldest known edition of this celebrated collection dates from 1621. The copy of Ravenscroft's Psalter in the Boston Historical Society bears the same date. It is therefore impossible for the Pilgrims to have brought that psalter with them. Hood's sentence also leads us to infer that the setting of psalms as found in Ravenscroft's book was used in the Colonies. I consider this very doubtful. As that setting was in four-part harmony,—and if, some twenty years after the landing of the

[1] Work quoted, p. 52.

"Mayflower," the New-England settlers had scruples about singing simple psalm-tunes in church, so that John Cotton was moved to publish, in 1647, his treatise, "Singing of Psalms, a Gospel ordinance," — it is safe to admit that they did not indulge in the luxury of a learned four-part arrangement. The American Puritans were never musical enough to make use of Ravenscroft's Psalm-Book. The directions printed in the edition of 1698 of the "Bay Psalm-Book," regarding the singing of the tunes, give ample proof of the scant musical knowledge found among the first American congregations.

Here are these "Some few Directions:" —

"*First*, observe how many note-compass the tune is next the place of your first note, and how many notes above and below that, so as you may begin the tune of your first note, as the rest may be sung in the compass of your and the people's voices, without Squeaking above or Grumbling below. For the better understanding of which take note of the following directions.

"Of the eight short Tunes used to four lines only, whose measure is to eight syllables on the first line, and six on the next; and may be sung to any Psalms of that measure.

Oxford Tune, Litchfield Tune, Low Dutch Tune } To Psalms Consolatory.

York Tune, Windsor Tune } To Psalms of Prayer, Confessions, and Funerals.

Cambridge Short Tune to peculiar Psalms as, 21, 24, 33, 70, 86 first metre, 114, 132.

"Those six short tunes, in tuning the first notes, will bear a cheerful high pitch, in regard to their whole compass from the lowest note, the highest is not above five or six notes.

St. David's Tune, Martyrs Tune } To Psalms of Praise and Thanksgiving.

"These two tunes are eight notes compass above the first note, and therefore begin the first note low.

"Of five long tunes following.

"Hackney Tune — 119 Psalm Tune, second metre. These two tunes begin your first note low, for the compass is nine notes, and eight above the first note of the tune.

"100 Psalm Tune. This one tune begin your note indifferent high, in regard you are to fall your note lower than your first pitch note.

"113 Psalm tune, and 148 Psalm Tune — These two tunes begin your first note low, in regard the Tune ascends eight notes above it."

Regarding the printing of the tunes Hood says, —

"That music was printed in this country, as early as 1690. The printing of the edition of 1698 is badly done, with many errors, and without bars, except to divide the lines of poetry. . . . The tunes are printed in two parts."

Though Hood says that "the music before the public at this time was Ravenscroft's book, which had been used in the Colonies since their first settlement, Playford's collection, published in England in 1671," he failed to point out to the reader from whence the above two-part arrangement, as found in that edition of the "Bay Psalm-Book," was taken. The question concerning Ravenscroft's book I have already answered in a previous place; and there is absolutely nothing in the American hymn-tune compilations that points to Ravenscroft's work. I doubt whether Hood, if he was at all acquainted with Ravenscroft's and Playford's collections, examined them closely enough in order to see which of the two collections was really used by the first compilers of the Colonies. My research has convinced me that it was not Ravenscroft, but Playford, who, as a writer and compiler, exercised, during the last part of the seventeenth, and considerably into the

eighteenth, century, the greatest influence on American musical development. It was from Playford's books, "An Introduction to the Skill of Musick," first published in London in 1654, and enlarged in 1655 (this book passed through many editions), and "The Whole Book of Psalms, Composed in three Parts," and first published in 1677, that American musical compilers took nearly all the material they found useful for their own needs, but *without naming the author from whom they borrowed.* At the end of the first book of the "Introduction to the Skill of Musick" Playford gives twenty-six psalm-tunes, the melody with a bass; and from these tunes were selected those which appeared in the above-mentioned edition of the "Bay Psalm-Book." (Example I.)

The first practical instruction-book on singing that was published in New England seems to have been compiled by the Rev. John Tufts, pastor of the Second Church in Newbury. He was educated at Harvard College, and was ordained pastor of the above church in 1714. According to Hood, Tufts prepared and published, about 1712, a book entitled "A very Plain and Easy Instruction to the Art of Singing Psalm tunes; with the Cantos or Trebles of twenty eight Psalm tunes, contrived in such a manner as that the Learner may attain the Skill of singing them with the greatest ease and speed imaginable." About 1714 he issued a new book, an improvement on his first, "An Introduction to the singing of Psalm Tunes, in a plain and easy method. With a Collection of Tunes in three Parts."

The Rev. J. Tufts, knowing, no doubt, the difficulties and the aversion learners in general have in learning to sing by note, endeavored, in a certain degree, to do away

with such difficulty by substituting letters to the notes. Says the author, —

"The tunes which follow are set down in such a plain and easy Method that a few Rules may suffice for Direction in Singing. The letters F. S. L. M. marked on the several lines and spaces in the following Tunes, stand for these Syllables viz: Fa. Sol. La. Mi."

Then there follow directions to distinguish tones and semi-tones, to find the place of the "Mi," to know the meaning of the flat and the sharp.

"These letters will serve also to measure the length of the notes, and to show how long the note is to be sounded. For instance, in common time a letter with two points F : is to be sounded as long as you would distinctly be telling, one, two, three, four, or equal to 𝅝; A letter with one point F. is to be sounded while you are telling one, two, or equal to 𝅗𝅥; F equal to ♩ counts one. When you find two letters tied together with a bow, F͡F, they are to be sounded no longer than you would be singing a letter without a point, and to be sung to one syllable in the Psalm."

The rules teach common time and triple time, the clefs, the meaning of the "direct" and of the "repeats." Tufts thinks that "the comparison between the letters made use of in the following tunes, and the musical characters commonly used in psalmody, may be of advantage to some."

"A Few Lessons are next placed to assist in Raising and Falling of notes either gradual or by leaps, the Groundwork of all good singing, and is not to be attained ordinarily without the help of some skilful Person, or of an Instrument. But being attained and observing the few foregoing Rules you will be able to leap with your voice from one note to another, as they occur in various distances, and with a little practice to sing all tunes in this book, or others prick'd after this method in all their parts, with ease and pleasure."

Tufts's collection contained the following thirty-seven tunes: —

Bella (Bristol),
Canterbury,
Cambridge,
Commandment,
David's,
Exeter,
Gloucester,
Hackney or St. Mary's,
James's,
Isle of Wight,
London,
London (New),
Manchester,
Martyrs',
Norwich,
Northampton,
Oxford,
Peterborough,
Portsmouth,
Penitential Hymn,
Psalm 18,
Psalm 81,
Psalm 5, 8, or 12,
Psalm 100,
Psalm 100 (New),
Psalm 113 or 115,
Psalm 119,
Psalm 148,
Psalm 149,
Southwell,
Sabbath Hymn,
Standish,
New Creator,
Westminster,
Windsor,
Worcester,
York.

This collection must have been considered a rich one. It went through many editions, and is to be found bound together with a later edition of the "Bay Psalm-Book."

The tunes were written in three parts; and this whole collection of thirty-seven tunes were, all but one, written in common metre. This one, "Commandment," is in long metre.

Now, by reading the title-page of the Rev. J. Tufts's book, one might be induced to give him credit of having harmonized the psalm-tunes so peculiarly printed in letters in his collection. But this is not so. The reverend author has simply *failed to tell his readers that he selected his tunes and their three-part arrangement* from Playford's above-mentioned "Book of Psalms."[1] Playford's method of harmonizing psalm-tunes served, no doubt, as model to the first American church-singers who attempted a harmonic arrangement of a tune.

[1] Gould is mistaken in saying that Tufts's book is a reprint from Ravenscroft Gould is generally wrong.

In Tufts's endeavor to render the reading of the notes easy by replacing them with letters, we see the first attempt of a "Yankee notion" to do away with an imagined theoretical difficulty regarding musical practice. Numberless attempts have been made since in this direction in America; but after a little while the amateurish inventions, failing to realize the expected business profits and economy of time, have always sunk into a justly deserved oblivion. (Example II.)

In 1721 the Rev. Thomas Walter of Roxbury, Mass., edited a new singing-book, entitled "The Grounds and Rules of Musick explained. Or an Introduction to the Art of singing by Note: Fitted to the meanest Capacity. By Thomas Walter, A.M. Recommended by several Ministers. 'Let everything that hath truth praise the Lord,' Ps. 150, 6. Boston: Printed by Benjamin Mecon at the new Printing Office near the Town Hall: for Thomas Johnstone, in Brattle Street."

The book was a small oblong volume. The "Recommendatory Preface" runs thus:—

"An ingenious Hand having prepared Instructions to direct them that would learn to sing Psalms after a regular manner; and it being thought proper that we should signify unto the Publick some of our sentiments on this Occasion; We do declare that we rejoice in *Good Helps* for a beautiful Performance of that holy service, wherein we are to glorify God and edify one another with the *spiritual Songs*, wherewith he has enriched us.

"And we would encourage all, more particularly our *Young People*, to accomplish themselves with skill to *sing the Songs of the Lord* according to the *good rules* of Psalmody. Hoping that the Consequence of it will be what not only the *Assemblies* of *Zion* will, *Decently and in Order*, carry on this *Exercise of Piety*, but also it will be the more introduced in private Families, and become a Part of our *Family Sacrifice*. At the same Time we would above all exhort, That the main concern of all may be to make it not a

mere *Bodily Exercise*, but, sing with *Grace in their Hearts*, and with minds attentive to the *Truth* in the Psalms, which they sing, and affected with them; so that in their *Hearts they may make Melody to the Lord.*

"Boston, April 18, 1721."

Here are the names of the "several Ministers" who recommended Walter's book:—

Peter Thacher,	Thomas Foxcroft,	Joseph Belcher,
Joseph Sewall,	Samuel Checkley,	Benjamin Wadsworth,
Thomas Prince,	Increase Mather,	Benjamin Coleman,
John Webb,	Cotton Mather,[1]	Nathaniel Williams,
William Cooper,	Nehemiah Walter,	Nathaniel Hunting.

The above list, comprising the names of some of the foremost New-England clergymen living at that time, proves that ministers in general were desirous of introducing and encouraging a better style of singing in church.

I copy here Walter's interesting remarks introducing his "Some brief And very plain Instructions for singing by Note:"—

"Musick is the Art of modulating Sounds, either with the Voice, or with an Instrument. And as there are Rules for the right Management of an Instrument, so there are no less for the well ordering of the Voice. And tho' Nature itself suggests unto us a Notion of Harmony, and many Men, without any other Tutor, may be able to strike upon a few Notes — tolerably tuneful; yet this bears no more Proportion to a Tune composed and sung by the Rules of Art than the vulgar Hedge Notes of every Rustic does to the Harp of *David.* Witness the modern Performances both in the Theatres[2] and the Temple.

"Singing is reducible to the *Rules of Art;* and he who has made himself Master of a few of these Rules, is able at *first Sight*, to

[1] Left out in Hood's list, p. 76.

[2] Had they theatres at this time in New England?

sing Hundreds of New Tunes, which he never saw or heard before; and this by the bare Inspection of the Notes, without hearing them from the Mouth of the Singer: Just as a Person who has learned all the Rules of *Reading*, is able to read any new Book, without any further Help or Instruction. This is a Truth, although known to, and proved by many of us, yet very hardly to be received and credited in the Country.

"What a Recommendation is this then to the following Essay, that our Instructions will give you that knowledge in vocal Musick, whereby you will be able to sing all the Tunes in the World, without hearing of them sung by another, and being constrained to get them by Heart from any other Voice than your own.[1] We don't call him a *Reader*, who can recite *Memoriter* a few Pieces of the Bible, and other Authors, but put him to read in those Places where he is a Stranger, cannot tell *ten Words in a Page*. So is not he worthy of the Name of a Singer, who has gotten eight or ten Tunes in his Head, and can sing them like a *Parrot by Rote*, and knows nothing more about them, than he has heard from the Voices of others; and show him a Tune that is new and unknown to him, can't strike two Notes of it.

"These Rules then will be serviceable upon a *threefold* account, *First*, They will instruct us in the right and true singing of the Tunes that are already in Use in Our Churches, which, when they first came out of the Hands of the Composers of them, when sung according to the Rules of the *Scale of Musick*, but are now miserably tortured, and twisted, and quavered, in some Churches, into an horrid Medly of confused and disorderly Voices. This must necessarily create a most disagreeable Jar in the Ears of all that can judge better of singing than these Men, who please themselves with their own ill-founding *Echoes*. For to compare small things with great, our Psalmody has suffered the like Inconveniences which our *Faith* has laboured under, in Case it had been committed and trusted to the uncertain and doubtful Conveyance of *Oral Tradition*. Our Tunes are, for Want of a Standard to appeal to in all our Singing, left to the Mercy of every unskilful Throat to chop and alter, twist and change, according to their infinitely divers and no less odd Humours and Fancies. That this is most true, I appeal to the Experience of those who have

[1] This bait did not much tempt the colonists.

happened to be present in many of our Congregations, who will grant me, that there are no two Churches that sing alike. Yea, I have myself heard (for Instance) *Oxford* Tune sung in *three* Churches (which I purposely forbear to mention) with as much Difference as there can possibly be between *York* and *Oxford*, or two other different Tunes. Therefore, any Man that pleads with me, for what they call the *Old Way*, I can confute him only by making this Demand, *What is the Old Way?* Which I am sure they cannot tell. For, one Town says, their's is the true *Old Way*, another Town thinks the same of their's, and so does a Third of their Way of tuning it. But let such Men know from the Writer of this Pamphlet (Who can sing all the various Twistings of the old Way, and that too according to the *Genius* of most of the Congregations, as well as they can any one Way; which must therefore make a better judge, than they are or can be;) affirms, that the Notes sung according to the *Scale and Rules of Musick*, are the true *Old Way*. For some Body or other did compose our Tunes, and did they (think ye) compose them by Rule or by Rote? If the Latter, How came they pricked down in our *Psalm*-Books? And this I am sure of, we sing them as they are pricked down, and I am as sure the Country People do not. Judge yet then, who is in the Right. Nay, I am sure, if you would once be at the Pains to learn our Way of Singing, you could not but be convinced of what I now affirm. But our Tunes have passed through strange *Metamorphoses* (beyond those of Ovid) since their first Introduction into the World. But to return to the Standard from which we have so long departed cannot fail to set all to Rights, and to reduce the sacred Songs to their primitive Form and Composition.

"Again, It will serve for the Introduction of more Tunes into the divine Service; and these Tunes of no small Pleasantry and variety, which will in a great Measure render this Part of Worship still more delightful to us. For at present we are confined to *eight or ten Tunes*, and in some Congregations to little more than half that Number, which being so often sung over, are too apt, if not to create a Distaste, yet at least mightily to lessen the Relish of them.

"There is one more Advantage which will accrue from the Instructions of this little Book; and that is this, That by the just and equal *Timing* of the Notes, our Singing will be reduc'd to an

exact Length, so as not to fatigue the Singer with a tedious Protraction of the Notes beyond the Compass of a Man's Breath, and the Power of his Spirit: A Fault very frequent in the Country, where I myself have twice in one Note paused to take Breath. This *keeping of Time* in Singing will have this natural Effect also upon us, that the whole Assembly shall begin and end every single Note, and every Line exactly together, to an Instant, which is a wonderful Beauty in Singing, when a great Number of Voices are together sounding forth the divine Praises. But for want of this, I have observed in many Places one Man is upon this Note, while another is a Note before him, which produces something so hideous and disorderly, as is beyond Expression bad. And then even, unaffected, and smooth sounding the Notes, and the Omission of those unatural Quaverings and Turnings, will serve to prevent all that Discord and lengthy Tediousness, which is so much a Fault in our Singing of Psalms. For much Time is taken up in shaking out these Turns and Quavers; and besides, no two Men in the Congregation quaver alike, or together; which sounds in the Ears of a Good Judge, like *five hundred* different Tunes roared out at the same Time, whose perpetual Interfearings with one another, perplexed Jars, and unmeasured Periods, would make a Man wonder at the false Pleasure which they conceive in that which good Judges of Musick and Sounds, cannot bear to hear.

"These are the good Effects, which our Skill in the *Gamut* will produce. We shall then without any further Preamble, proceed to give the Reader some brief and plain Instructions for singing by Note and Rule."

These "Instructions" also *are chiefly compiled* from Playford's above-mentioned book. The following *naïve* rule, which is the first, will serve to give an idea of the degree of knowledge of the teacher:—

"There are in Nature but *seven distinct sounds*, every eighth Note being the same. Thus when a Tune is sung by another upon a key too low for the Compass of my Voice, if I will sing with the Person, it must be all the Way, *eighth Notes* above him. I naturally sound an *Eighth* higher. So a Woman naturally strikes eighth Notes above the grum and low sounding Voice of a Man, and it

makes no more Difference than the singing of two Persons upon an Union or a Pitch. So on the contrary, when we sing with a Voice too high and shrill for us, we strike very naturally into an Octave, or Eighth below. And here let it be observed, that the *Height* of a Note and the *Strength* of singing it, are two different Things. Two Notes of equal Height may be sounded with different degrees of Strength, so as that one shall be heard much further than the other."

The tunes in Walter's book are arranged in three parts. Hood says that "this is the first music printed with bars in America." We can easily account for that, since Walter took his arrangement of the tunes from Playford's "The Whole Book of Psalms," where they appear in that form.[1] The Rev. John Tufts, in his reprint of Playford's arrangement, cut out the bars marking the measures. As to the other remarks of Hood's concerning the tunes, — viz., "that the harmony is full and rich and correct," — his standard as a harmonist must not have been a very high one. Playford was not a clever harmonist: his arrangements of the psalm-tunes are rather amateurish. The three-part setting of the "Whole Book of Psalms" is very simple and often very weak, and was, consequently, not above the comprehension and appreciation of American church-singers of his day. Walter's book went through many editions, and contributed much towards the awakening of musical culture, in the form of psalmody, in the Colonies.

The useful work that was done by newly established singing-societies, regarding a more thorough study of learning to sing by note, soon began to bear good fruit. Choirs were formed to preside over the singing of hymn-tunes during worship; but with the increase of

[1] Walter erroneously mentions Playford as having set tunes to Sternhold and Hopkins's Version of the Psalms.

such choirs a greater demand for suitable choruses was made. The three-part arrangement of Playford's "Book of Psalms," as copied by Tufts and Walter, was gradually found to be too simple and easy; and the rising singing-societies also began to crave for more variety. Some among the emigrants coming from England, no doubt, brought with them copies of choral works, as used by choirs in the English churches; and thus the musical spirit having now, to a certain degree, been awakened among the colonists, the *American hymn-tune compiler* also began to appear, in order to provide singing-societies and church-choirs with a greater variety of choruses.

In 1755 Thomas Bailey republished at Newburyport, Mass., a portion of William Tansur's collection, entitled "A Complete Melody in Three Parts," which seems to have met with a great sale. Tansur and Williams were then gradually superseding Playford.

In 1761 there appeared in Philadelphia a new and large collection of church-music, entitled "Urania, or A Choice Collection of Psalm-Tunes, Anthems and Hymns. From the most approv'd Authors, with some entirely new: In Two, Three and Four Parts. The whole peculiarly adapted to the use of Churches, and Private Families. To which are prefix'd the Plainest and most Necessary Rules of Psalmody. By James Lyon, A.B., Hen. Dawkins, fecit. 1761. Price 15 s."

The book is, considering the date of its issue, rather handsomely engraved, and printed on fine English paper. The collection is dedicated "To the Clergy of every Denomination in America." Hymn-tune compilers generally appeal to the clergy. James Lyon addresses them thus:—

REVEREND SIRS.

Relying on the evident Propriety of your patronizing this Publication, permit me to lay Urania at your Feet.

Should the following Collection of Tunes be so fortunate as to merit your Approbation; To please the Taste of the Public; To assist the private Christian in his daily Devotion; And to improve, in any Degree, an important Part of Divine Service in these Colonies, for which it was designed: I shall think myself happy in being the Editor, notwithstanding the great Expense, Labour, and Anxiety, it has cost me to compleat it.

May You long continue Ornaments of your Profession: Daily see abundant Fruits of your Labour in the Reformation of Mankind: And incessantly enjoy those sublime Pleasures which nothing, but a Series of rational and virtuous Actions can create.

I am, Reverend Gentlemen,

Your Most obedient and humble Servant,

JAMES LYON.

The book gives the names of one hundred and forty-two subscribers, among whom officers and students of Nassau Hall (Princeton) in New Jersey are most numerously represented. The editor's "Great Expense, Labour, and Anxiety" were not rewarded by any pecuniary success; for report says that he was ruined by the enterprise. The book was compiled mostly from Tansur, Williams, Arnold, and other English psalm-tune lights of that stamp. The anthems are in the style of those florid, empty, sentimental, fuguing settings, prevalent at this epoch among some of the most popular church-musicians in England.

One of the numbers in Lyon's collection, the anthem the Ninety-seventh Psalm, is the composition of William Tuckey of New York, who, about 1753, was a schoolmaster in that city, and taught singing at the same time to children. In 1766 the trustees of Trinity Church paid him fifteen pounds for performing the

music for the opening of St. Paul's Church in New York. In 1771 he issued a proposal to publish three pieces of church-music (perhaps the above piece was one of these). He then called himself "Professor of the Theory and Practice of Vocal Music. Vicar chosen of the Cathedral Church of Bristol, and Clerk of the Parish of St. Mary's Port in said City. Now a Resident in New York." [1]

Tuckey's anthem called "Liverpool," as printed (though without naming the composer) in Lyon's collection, was full of press errors. Laws, with the permission of the "law heirs" of Tuckey, republished the piece, corrected, and printed with the peculiar musical characters of his own invention, in the third part of his "Art of Singing." The anthem is, of course, in the style of the popular English verse anthem of that time.

Some of the "Entirely new Tunes" in Lyon's collection — such as Ps. viii. 23: "The Lord descended," "Let the shrill Trumpet" — are, judging by their crudeness in harmonic and melodic treatment, apparently the products of some American musician, — perhaps by Lyon himself: he was little acquainted with the rudiments of musical composition. The reprint of the tunes is most faulty. To several tunes, which in Williams's collection are arranged for three parts, an alto part has been added in the most clumsy manner. In the psalm-tunes the melody is in the tenor; but, with regard to the use of the clefs, the editor had no judgment at all. Some pieces in four parts employ the bass clef, and the treble clef for the soprano, alto, and tenor; others,

[1] This information was kindly furnished me by Dr. Gilbert of Trinity Chapel, New York.

the four different clefs for the four different voices; sometimes the old-fashioned form, gs, is used, and then again this . All this, in spite of the "plainest Rules in Psalmody," must have created great confusion; and under such circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the "Lyon's Collection" was a failure. The book contained twelve pages of musical instruction, and here are "Some directions for singing:" —

"1. In learning the 8 Notes, get the assistance of some Person well acquainted with the Tones and Semitones.

"2. Chuse that Part which you can sing with the greatest ease, and make yourself Master of that 'first.'

"3. Sound all the high Notes as soft as possible, but low ones hard and full.

"4. Pitch your Tune that the highest and lowest Note may be sounded distinctly."

A great help that must have been to inexperienced singers! In 1764 a new collection of church-music appeared, compiled and published by Josiah Flagg of Boston. It was entitled "A Collection of the best Psalm Tunes, in two, three, and four parts; from the most approved authors, fitted to all measures, and approved by the best masters in Boston, New England; the greater part of them never before printed in America. Engraved by Paul Revere, printed and sold by him and Jos. Flagg."

The book is in the small, oblong form, of about eighty pages. It contains a preface of one page of general and apologetic remarks. "The Editor has endeavored, according to the best of his judgment, to extract the sweets out of a variety of fragrant flowers, has taken from every author he has seen, a few Tunes," etc. The

book was very well engraved in round notes, and was the first book printed on paper manufactured in the Colonies. Flagg, referring to this new industry, takes occasion to say, —

"It is hoped, it will not diminish the value of this book in the estimation of any, but may, in some degree, recommend it, even to those who have no peculiar relish for the music, that however we are obliged to the other side of the Atlantic chiefly for our tunes, the paper on which they are printed, is the manufacture of our own country."

J. Flagg was a composer, performer, and concert-manager in Boston. In 1773 he established a band, and was the leader of it, and gave several concerts in Faneuil Hall, at one of which there were over fifty performers.[1] The collection of church-music contained one hundred and sixteen tunes and two anthems. Hood supposes that some of the tunes were by American composers; but, the names of the authors not being given, it is impossible to point out the tunes that may have been written by Americans. It is possible that Flagg himself was one of those unknown composers, or perhaps W. Billings: Flagg and Billings were on friendly terms. Hood also remarks that "this is the first American book in which the music was written in four parts."[2] This is a wrong statement: four-part pieces had already appeared in Lyon's "Urania," of which Hood himself gave the title on a previous page of his book.

Although so far very few music-books had been printed in America, J. Flagg felt called upon to apologize for the publication of his collection. This truly great, and somewhat touching, modesty on the part of

[1] J. Moore, Appendix to Encyclopædia of Music. [2] Work quoted, p. 162.

an American compiler of church-music soon wore off, however; for, at a not very distant time from this epoch, the American church-singer was so overwhelmed by a deluge of collections of church-music of all styles that to give the titles of them would require a very thick volume. And if we may believe the army of competent and incompetent compilers, arrangers, editors, every collection of psalm-tunes was surely issued in order to "meeet a great want felt" for "this particular collection," by the public in general, and the congregations in particular.

An active compiler and publisher of church-music at this time was Daniel Bailey of Newburyport, Mass. He published in 1764 "A new and complete Introduction to the Grounds and Rules of Music, in two books." The "Grounds and Rules of Music" in the first book are taken from Th. Walter. The second is compiled from William Tansur's "Royal Melody." The tunes are all arranged in three parts, some of Playford's arrangement. Hood[1] thinks that "one bears the mark and style, as well as the name, of an American composition. But of this we are not certain, as the authors' names are in no instance given." Hood failed to point out that tune: he is, however, not a reliable judge on the "internal evidence" of a tune belonging to this or that composer.

Bailey's book seems to have been successful. In 1769 Bailey published a new collection, which he called "The American Harmony." There is, however, nothing American about the book but the getting-up of it. The collection consists of two volumes. The first is W. Tansur's "Royal Melody Complete;" and the

[1] p. 165.

second, published in 1771, is A. Williams's "Universal Psalmody." To the first volume is added "A new and correct Introduction to the Grounds of Musick, Rudimental, Practical and Technical," taken from Tansur. Bailey says in the advertisement to the second volume, —

"I take this opportunity to return my thanks to my Friends and Customers, for their kind Acceptance of my Publications of Musick which has far exceeded my Expectations. . . . I have also added sundry Anthems and Hymn-tunes, from the latest and most celebrated authors, such as I find approved by my Musical Friends, which I hope will be received with their usual Candor."

By this it seems that musical cultivation, principally with reference to church-singing, was steadily on the increase in the Colonies. Bailey, encouraged by the success of his publications, was wide awake in studying the wants of his customers. He was ready to *republish* any English collection of church-music that came under his notice, and which he and his advising musical friends thought would meet the taste of the New-England singing-societies and church-choirs.

W. Tansur's collection, "The Royal Melody Complete," appeared in England in 1754; and Aaron Williams's (music engraver and publisher) "The New Universal Psalmodist," in 1763. The reprints, by American publishers, of English harmonized psalm-tunes and anthems, are generally full of press errors; and, if the leaders of choirs were not better musicians than the publishers, the singing of some of such faulty harmonies, which are to be met with in nearly every piece, must have produced a fearful cacophony.

"It seems natural [justly remarks J. Moore [1]] that, when the

[1] Encyclopædia of Music.

publication of music was first commenced in this country, great inexperience and ignorance prevailed; and, as the knowledge of harmony was not yet acquired by anybody, nobody was found to be able to read or correct proofs of reprints of musical works; and nobody was inclined to expose his ignorance by attempting to correct errors. A committee, having resolved to publish a book, saw fit to introduce some tunes from a recent English publication, with the figures of the harmony attached; and, when one of their number was asked the use of the figures, he honestly answered, that he did not know, but that the committee intended to make the public believe they knew something."

Music-committees of churches are still in the same predicament. They do not know much about music: they are always making the congregation believe that they know something.

The diversities of style and form of the pieces in Lyon's, Flagg's, and Bailey's collections prove that the New-England church-singer was now fast advancing beyond the stage of simple psalmody, as found in Tufts's and Walter's (Playford) books. The florid style of the English anthem, as composed by the successors of Purcell, began to find favor with the singing-societies of the Colony. The numerous "fuguing choruses" and even canons from "two in one to seven parts in one," as published in Bailey's above-mentioned collection, show that there must have existed at the time a taste for contrapuntal music, or at least a desire to master its difficulties; and the solos and duets for different voices, as met with in anthems, point to a greater efficiency on the part of singers. If these pieces were then sung, as seems probable, at the regular services of the church, that part of religious worship must have experienced a great revolution during the half-century when clergymen found it necessary to advocate a more musical rendering of the psalm-tunes.

The forming of church-choirs, however, caused those clergymen and congregations who favored "regular singing" a good deal of trouble. A paragraph from the "History of Worcester" says, —

"The final blow was struck to the old system by the resolution of the town, Aug. 5, 1779: 'Voted, that the singers sit in the front seats of the front gallery, and that those gentlemen who have hitherto sat in the front seats of said gallery, have a right to sit in the front and second seat below, and that said singers have said seats appropriated to said use. Voted, that said singers be requested to take said seats, and carry on the singing in public worship.' The sabbath succeeding the adoption of these votes, after the hymn had been read by the minister, the aged and venerable Deacon Chamberlain, unwilling to desert the custom of his fathers, rose, and read the first line, according to the usual practice. The singers, prepared to carry the alteration into effect, proceeded without pausing at the conclusion. The white-haired officer of the church, with the full power of his voice, read on, until the louder notes of the collected body overpowered the attempt to resist the progress of improvement; and the deacon, deeply mortified at the triumph of musical reformation, took his hat, and retired from the meeting-house in tears."

In the "History of Rowley" we read, —

"1752. The parish voted that those who had learned the art of singing may have liberty to sit in the front gallery.

"1785. The parish desire the singers, both male and female, to sit in the gallery, and will allow them to sing once on each Lord's day without reading by the deacon."

When choirs sang poorly, they were even rebuked by the minister. Thus, Dr. T. Bellamy, once hearing his choir sing in a sad style, read another psalm, and said, "You must try again, for it is impossible to preach after such singing."

But, after a reform in musical matters had set in, a new vexation to the clergyman began to spring up.

That so much desired appropriate simplicity and modesty which should preside over the singing of psalm-tunes was gradually superseded by flashy anthems, boisterous fuguing choruses, and long-spun-out solos. The church-singer, whom the musical clergyman had preached into existence, began to feel his great importance as an integrant part of the church-service; and scarcely had he conquered his envied place, when the clergyman found himself obliged to preach him down again. Feuds between the minister and choir began to exist. The musical taste of the chorister was often in contradiction to that of the minister. The chorister grew strong in vanity in proportion as his proficiency in singing by note advanced. The church-choir began to expect privileges within the congregations. "At a church in New England a stranger was called to officiate in the absence of the pastor, and, not being familiar with some of the rules of the choir, so much offended them that they would not sing. After several efforts the preacher determined not to be discomfited, and read the verses, —

> 'Let those refuse to sing
> Who never knew our God!
> But children of the heavenly King
> May speak their joys abroad.'"

This struck the conscience of the vain choristers, and roused them to sing.

A New-Hampshire minister fell into a difficulty with his choir, which caused them to desert their duties during service. At length the choir relented, and re-appeared at the usual hour of service. The minister most unexpectedly saw them in their places, and in due

time, looking very significantly, rose and read the following hymn: —

> "And are ye wretches yet alive,
> And do ye yet rebel?"

Only very credulous persons would believe, however, that the ministers were always the innocent victims of the choirs.

Another point of great importance with regard to the development of American church-music must be accentuated here. Had the American clergy faithfully carried out the work of selecting and preparing suitable music for their congregations, according to the precedents of the Rev. Messrs. Tufts and Walter; had they, as they ought to have done, found it their imperious duty to keep pace in their musical culture with that of their ministerial practice; had they learned to understand and respect in musical art that which is noble and pure and sacred according to religious symbolism, and inspired by religious fervor, and thus, without becoming monotonous and tedious, fit to be wedded to the sacred words of the psalms and hymns; had they endeavored to distinguish between musical æsthetic beauty, and vulgarity and frivolity, between beautiful fitness and unæsthetic inappropriateness; had they earnestly considered the study of that side of musical art which has such intimate relation with religious worship, as an inseparable part of their ministerial calling, in the spirit of those religious men who organized, or reformed, religious forms of worship, from David up to Luther, — then they would have been enabled to control and lead the inefficient superficial organists and vain choir-singers; they would then have been looked upon

as authorities in matters of religious music, when now they are regarded with suspicion and doubt; and American church-music would to-day stand on a far more dignified basis. But they indolently suffered the tradesman to take this important religious business out of their hands; nay, as we shall see hereafter, they often joined them in the issue of numberless collections, the greater part of which were filled with vulgar and frivolous psalm-tunes. Such partnerships were not made from a desire to correct abuses, or to introduce a better, more suitable sacred style of psalm and hymn tunes, but rather from a desire to gain some more worldly ends, more pecuniary advantages.

The clergyman often expressed his utter disrespect for musical theory, and musicians too; and, but for that theory, and the honest, earnest striving of some musicians who respect and love their art, church-music would now be in such a quagmire of demoralization that it would be a blessing to refined ears and religious senses to see it banished altogether from the church. Another curious custom, a remnant of old Puritan reform, was, by the establishment of choirs, gradually banished from the service: I mean "the lining-out of the psalms." Its origin is as follows: The Assembly of Divines at Westminster, to whom Parliament referred all matters concerning religion, abolished the liturgy as a superstitious ritual, and enjoined that no music should be allowed during divine worship but psalm-singing.

"It is the duty of christians to praise God publicly by singing of psalms all together in the congregation and also privately in the family. In the singing of psalms the voice is to be audibly and gravely ordered; but the chief care must be to sing with understanding and with grace in the heart, making melody unto the Lord. That

the whole congregation may join therein, every one that can read is to have a psalm-book and all others not disabled by age or otherwise are to be exhorted to learn to read. But for the present where many in the congregation cannot read, it is convenient that the minister or some fit person appointed by him and the other ruling officers do read the psalm line by line, before singing thereof."

When the Puritans came to this country, they, no doubt, were all acquainted with their version of the psalms, and sang them without "lining them out." Besides, the above resolution by the assembly of English ministers, regarding singing of psalms, dates twenty years after the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. But, when the "Bay Psalm-Book" was introduced, some of the New-England congregations, moved by the same reasons as those that decided the English ministers to recommend the "lining-out of psalms," introduced that custom also; which was resorted to at first as a mere practical convenience, but became in course of time of such importance to some of the members of the congregations that they looked upon its performance as a religious duty. And when ministers and other men of taste complained of the absurd custom, — which, when printed psalm-books became plentiful, and at the time when people nearly all knew how to read, seemed still more absurd, — and endeavored to do away with it, the attempt was at first most vehemently opposed by many congregations; and almost in every town of New England the opposition by the advocates of "lining-out the psalms" to those who wished it abolished was as stubborn, and caused as much ill feeling as the effort to introduce "regular singing." Some clergymen, anxious to have the psalms sung through without the

awkward rest after each line caused by reading it first, delivered discourses against the absurd custom, endeavoring to prove from the Bible, and the practice of the primitive churches, that there is nowhere to be found an excuse for such a senseless practice. The Rev. Dr. Watts, whose version of the psalms and hymns was gradually introduced in many New-England churches, took occasion, in the preface of an early edition of his work, to complain of the custom. "It were to be wished," said he, "that all congregations and private families would sing as they do in foreign countries, without reading line by line. Though the author has done what he could to make the sense complete in every line or two, yet many inconveniences will always attend this unhappy manner of singing." Inconveniences like the following as given by Hood, —

"The Lord will come, and he will not,"

or,

"Keep silence, but speak out."

And such absurd contradictions, caused by the incomplete sense of the line, were gravely read, and afterwards sung.

In churches where they had choirs the custom gradually disappeared, though not without a struggle between the choir and the clerk. Sometimes the members of the choir would get the better of the clerk and his party by promptly attacking the tune of the psalm set, in singing it through in steady time; but at other times the clerk, conscious of his important office, would bide his time and take his revenge, like that clerk in a Massachusetts town, where, the choir having started the tune without giving the deacon time to "line it out,"

he rose, at the conclusion of the choir's singing of the psalm, and, gravely setting his spectacles upon his nose, opened the book, saying: "Now let the people of God sing," and went on "lining-out" another psalm. I believe in some country churches they are still indulging in this unique style of singing.

Musical culture in America, as in the great musical countries in Europe, — Italy, France, Germany, — took its starting-point from the church; and the first American music-teachers were Puritan clergymen. English Puritan clergymen encouraged, nay, insisted on, the banishment of music from the church; and this fanatical measure against a noble and elevating art had caused musical culture to be so neglected that the singing of the simplest psalm-tunes inflicted the most excruciating torments on a sensitive ear. When the time-honored practice of uniting sacred song with divine service was on the point of being entirely abandoned, a few more liberal-thinking New-England Puritan ministers of the Gospel, feeling the efficacy of well-regulated and appropriate church-singing, endeavored, with their best understanding and means, to re-establish it in their churches. Thus an art that once had the misfortune to be associated with superstition and frivolity was resuscitated by the very followers of those in whose eyes it had been considered as an opponent of true religion.

When the first American colonists left the shores of the Old World great masters had already impressed the stamp of their genius on the progress of European musical art. Palestrina and Lassus had just stepped out of the world to join the heavenly choir of immortal singers. In Italy the lyrical and sacred musical dramas,

the opera, and the oratorio had just struck their first roots. The two Gabrieli, Monteverde, Ferabosco, and others were busy in finding adequate forms for pure instrumental music. Germany and France endeavored to follow the road newly opened by the Italian melodists. England, after the great rebellion, earnestly endeavored to regain its lost ground in music. The great Henry Purcell appeared, and by his genius caused the English nation for a time to forget that it had lost its musical prestige. Those two musical giants, Handel and Bach, began to fashion their immortal strains when the New-England Puritans were deliberating whether it were in accordance with the teaching of the Bible to sing or read the psalms in the church. Haydn had written his first symphony when the New-England congregations were still divided about the question whether to reject or retain the "lining-out" of the psalm. The child Mozart was astonishing the European musical world as a performer and a composer when Lyon, Flagg, and Bailey ventured to issue their collections of church-music, compiled from the weak and often insipid strains of a Tansur, Williams, and others of that stamp. The composer of the Ninth Symphony was born the same year that the Boston tanner-composer, William Billings, published his first crude production, "The New-England Psalm-Singer, or American Chorister." On this side of the Atlantic Ocean musical art was faintly trying to strike some weak rootlets, when, on the other side, it was already towering up into the clouds like an Alp.

SECOND PERIOD, 1771–1815.

THE FIRST AMERICAN COMPOSERS.

CHAPTER III.

WILLIAM BILLINGS AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

MUSICAL culture in New England received its first great impulse from the metropolis of the Colonies, Boston. While the descendants of the first Pilgrims who settled at Plymouth were, according to their character, education, and religious aspirations, satisfied with a crude psalmody, and continued obstinately to adhere to the "lining-out" of the psalms, with determination rejecting any innovations in their religious habits and their organization of the church-service, the inhabitants of Boston, by means of a livelier intercourse, both political and commercial, with England, and through the benefits of greater prosperity, had attained to a greater degree of liberality towards learning and social refinement; and the cultivation of poetry and music, though appreciated mainly in its bearings upon sacred things, had gradually found a home among Bostonians.

"In one respect [says J. Stetson Barry [1]] both colonies sprang from the same source; religious persecution having ushered them

[1] History of Massachusetts.

into life, and a desire to rear an asylum—a refuge for the oppressed who dissented from the views and policy of the Anglican Church—having been the groundwork or foundation upon which they were built. But, though both were the offsprings of religious persecution, in other respects there was a striking and an inherent distinction in the views, the ranks, the talents, and the resources of the two; a distinction which as it marked their beginnings, it influenced, moulded, and determined their destiny.

"The Pilgrims were Separatists, having openly withdrawn from the communion of the national church. Few of them had been reared in opulence or luxury. Few had enjoyed extensive opportunities for literary culture. Early inured to hardship and toil, inaccustomed to the ease and refinement of wealth, simple in their habits, and moderate in their desires, they were eminently fitted as pioneers to New-England, preparing the wilderness for the possession and occupancy of future generations. Men of unwavering faith and of examplary morals, with a profound reverence for God and his work, they were the servants of posterity, instruments to break the ice for others; and, though cast into the shade by the success of the second colony, they are entitled to the honor which springs from true worth, and their magnanimous spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion will ever endear their memories to all capable of appreciating their virtues, and comprehending their excellencies.

"The Massachusetts colonists were Puritans connected with the national church, though not fully conforming to its service and recital. Their ministers were men of standing and influence. Receiving a finished education at the leading universities, their talents, which were conspicuous, were acceptably exercised until their zeal for reform, and opposition to ceremonies, induced the censure of the bishops and expulsion from their parishes. Of the laity many were well versed in public affairs, possessed fortunes, accumulated or inherited, and lived in the enjoyment of the external comforts which wealth can command. A few moved in the higher circles of society, bore titles of nobility, and were genuine representatives of the conventional dignity of another country. . . . Hence the history of the second colony, though not destitute of incidents of hardship and suffering, is of a stamp very different from the first. Its enterprises were promoted with vigor and suc-

cess. Its superior advantages gave it an immediate ascendency. It stretched its arms, scattered abroad its means, became the patron of the arts and the sciences, founded seminaries of learning, etc."

Though it is possible that in this or that New-England town some enthusiastic and talented psalm-singer may have been moved by the musical spirit to try his hand in writing new psalm-tunes, yet so far no proof of such an artistic attempt has become known to me; and, until another New-England town steps forward with undoubted documentary proof of the contrary, to Boston will belong most of the honor of having opened a new era for musical development in the New World. It was one of her sons who, first among Americans, stepped forward with the publication of a number of pieces of church-music composed by himself; and this first Yankee composer was *William Billings*, who was born at Boston, Oct. 7, 1764, and who died there Sept. 29, 1800. He was by profession a tanner; and having been fond of music he probably belonged to a singing-school, where he learned to read notes as far as was then required of a chorus-singer. Finding that he had a certain amount of music in his soul, though its development was restricted by the narrow circle of Puritan psalmody, he began to imitate the form of the tunes that pleased him most, and harmonized them as best he could, using the sides of his leather, or the boards of the tannery, as note-paper, upon which he chalked them down. He seems to have been considered a good church-singer, as far as singing then was understood and appreciated in New England. He was popular with his companions. Among others, Gov. Samuel Adams and Dr. Pierce of Brookline, two lovers of music,

took great interest in Billings, and encouraged him much in his attempts as a composer of church-music. In the church-choir and in occasional concert-performances these two men used to stand side by side with the musical tanner. Billings eventually became a singing-teacher. It is said that his voice, rough, powerful, and ponderous, drowned that of every singer near him.

The cultivation of music in the Colonies having made considerable progress during the preceding fifty years a greater demand was created for new and suitable pieces: church-choirs, having, no doubt, become tired of always singing the same tunes, wished for a greater variety. Billings, encouraged by several of his attempts at setting psalms, published in 1770 a collection of his first compositions, entitled, "The New-England Psalm Singer: or American Chorister. Containing a number of Psalm-tunes, Anthems and Canons. In four and five Parts. (Never before published.) Composed by William Billings, a Native of Boston, in New-England. Matt. 12. 16. 'Out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings hast thou perfected Praise.' James 5. 13. 'Is any Merry? Let him sing Psalms.'

> 'O, praise the Lord with one consent.
> And in this grand design
> Let Britain and the Colonies
> Unanimously join [jine!].'

Boston: New-England. Printed by Edes & Gill."

The "New-England Psalm-Singer" was well received by the "singing-schools." Though the critics, as far as they then ventured at all to express any opinion about music, found fault with the composer's work, Billings felt highly flattered and encouraged by his success. New psalm-tunes, new anthems, were chalked

down; and, when the War of Independence broke out, he gave vent to his patriotism in strains of the wildest enthusiasm and fervor. He was altogether a very original being, and, in some sense, the prototype of the Yankee psalm-tune music-teacher as he existed at the end of the last century. Billings was a mixture of ludicrous, eccentric, commonplace, smart, active, patriotic, and religious elements, with a slight touch of musical and poetical talent. To this side of the tanner-composer's moral nature his personal appearance and habit formed a harmonious sequel. He was somewhat deformed, blind of one eye, one leg shorter than the other, one arm somewhat withered; and he was given to the habit of continually taking snuff. He carried this precious article in his coat-pocket made of leather, and every few minutes would take a pinch, holding the snuff between the thumb and clinched hand. To this picture we must add his stentorian voice, made, no doubt, rough as a saw by the effects of the quantity of snuff that was continually rasping his throat.

He was an enthusiastic admirer of music.

"Perhaps some of my grave Readers may conclude I am possessed with a Musical Enthusiasm, if I insist too much on the Marvelous — That I am a musical Enthusiast I readily grant, and I think it is impossible for the Votaries to be otherwise for when we consider the many wonderful Effects which Music has on the Animal Spirit, and upon the nervous system we are ready to cry out in a fit of Enthusiasm — *Great art thou, O Music!*"[1]

Billings's opportunities for receiving a musical education were at that time, in the Colonies, very scant. What he knew, he probably picked up by himself in those "Introductions to Singing," as found in the Eng-

[1] "An Encomium on Music" in the New-England Psalm-Singer.

lish hymn-tune collections; possibly "Tansur's Musical Grammar" — a superficial, pedantic conpilation — may also have fallen into his hands. Under these circumstances one might fancy that Billings would have been satisfied with the most simple harmonic arrangement of his tunes; but this was not the case. His first collection contained, besides psalm-tunes, anthems and canons: he thus made bold attempts at contrapuntal forms. But the motto on the title-page of his *opus*, "Out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings hast thou perfected Praise," can be applied to him as a harmonist. He remained, with regard to the theoretical rules of composition, all his life long "A Babe and Suckling."

With great self-possession and *naïveté* he says in the preface to his "New-England Psalm-Singer," —

"To all musical Practitioners."

"Perhaps it may be expected by some, that I could say something concerning rules for composition; to these I answer that *Nature is the best Dictator*, for all the hard dry studied rules that ever were prescribed will not enable any person to form an Air any more than the bare knowledge of the four and twenty letters, and strict Grammatical rules will qualify a scholar for composing a piece of Poetry, or properly adjusting a Tragedy without a Genius. It must be Nature; Nature must lay the Foundation, Nature must give the Thought. But perhaps some may think I mean and intend to throw Art entirely out of Question, I answer by no Means, for the more Art is displayed, the more Nature is decorated. And in some sorts of composition, there is dry Study requir'd, and Art very requisite. For instance in a Fuge. But even there Art is subservient to Genius, for Fancy goes first, and strikes out the Work roughly, and Art comes after and polishes it over.[1] But to return to my Text: I have read several Authors Rules on Composition, and find the strictest of them make some Exceptions, as thus, they say that two 8^{vos} or two 5^{ths} may not be

[1] Very good for Billings. Perhaps Gov. S. Adams assisted.

taken together rising or falling, unless one be Major and the other Minor; but rather than spoil the Air, they will allow that Breach to be made, and this Allowance gives great Latitude to young Composers, for they may always make that Plea and say, if I am not allowed to transgress the Rules of composition I shall certainly spoil the Air, and cross the Strain that Fancy dictated: And indeed this is without dispute, a very just Plea, for I am sure I have often and sensibly felt the disagreeable and slavish Effect of such Restraint as is here pointed out, and so I believe that every Composer of Poetry as well as Musick, for I presume there are as strict Rules for Poetry, as for Musick. But as I have often heard of a Poetical License, I don't see why with the same propriety there may not be a musical License, for Poetry and Musick are in close Connection, and nearly allied, besides they are often assistants to each other, and like a true friend often hide each others feelings: For I have known a Piece of Poetry that hath neither Rhime nor Reason in it, pass for tolerably good sense, because it happened to be set to an excellent Piece of Musick, and to get Respect rather for its good Fortune in falling into such respectable company than for any Merit in itself; so likewise I have known and heard a very indifferent Tune often sung and much caress'd, only because it was set to a fine Piece of Poetry, without this recommendation, perhaps it would not be sung twice over by one Person, and would be deemed to be dearly bought only at the expense of Breath requisite to perform it.

"For my own part, as I don't think myself confined to any Rules for Composition laid down by any that went before me, neither should I think (were I to pretend to lay down rules) that any who comes after me were any ways obligated to adhere to them any further than they should think proper: so in fact I think it is best for every composer to be his own learner. Therefore, upon this consideration, for me to dictate, or pretend to prescribe Rules of this Nature for others, would not only be very unnecessary but also a very great piece of Vanity."

In 1778 Billings published a second book, "The Singing Master's Assistant;" and judging from the composer's preface to this new collection we discover that Master Billings began to have his doubts about

trusting entirely to "Nature as being the best Dictator" in matters of musical composition. He makes the following confession: —

"Kind reader, no doubt you remember that about ten years ago I published a book entitled 'The New-England Psalm Singer;' and truly a most masterly performance I then thought it to be. How lavish was I of encomium on this my infant production. 'Welcome, thrice Welcome thou legitimate Offspring of my brain, go forth my little book, go forth and immortalize the name of your Author; may your sale be rapid and may you speedily run through ten thousand Editions.' Said I, 'Thou art my Reuben, my first born; the beginning of my Strength, the Excellency of my Dignity, and the Excellency of my power.' But to my great mortification I soon discovered it was Reuben in the sequel, and Reuben all over; I have discovered that many pieces were never worth my printing or your inspection."

I cannot tell how our psalm-tune composer came to discover this truth regarding the deficiency of his first settings; but his second collection proves an effort on his part to confine himself, as far as he was capable, to certain "Rules for Composition." The "Singing Master's Assistant" is, in many points, a great improvement on the "New-England Psalm-Singer." It became very popular throughout New England, and was considered and called "Billings's best."

Nevertheless, Bill Billings remained an awkward harmonist and a worse contrapuntist. Though there is apparently much independent motion in the different voice parts of his pieces, yet the harmony they produce is at times most distressing: instead of sweet concords we experience startling discords. The idea of the relation of keys, except that of the tonic to dominant and sub-dominant, was foreign to Billings's *savoir-faire.* True, there is in some of his psalm-tunes a certain

freshness and melodic charm. Original expression is not wanting, and a lively rhythm pervades them. All this imparts to the best of his pieces much life and motion. But all that renders a composition, the shortest as well as the most elaborate, an art-work is to a great degree wanting in Billings's productions. Appropriate cadenzas, marking the cut of the phrases and periods, are seldom employed with any degree of clearness and effect: the piece scarcely dares to leave its fundamental key; and, if here and there an attempt at modulation is made, the hearer listens in continual fear of a disaster. Either the composer lights on an unexpected key, out of keeping with the harmonic progression of the phrase; or, finding that he has ventured on unsafe ground, he abruptly breaks off and travels back in the best way possible to more congenial regions. In his elaborate pieces — anthems as he called them — Billings's *savoir-faire* as a composer is in a still more precarious predicament: not to speak of hideous consecutive fifths and illogical progressions of octaves, *motivi*, without any inner æsthetic connection, chase each other, without rhyme and reason, from one end of the scale to the other; chords and harmonies tumble upon each other without order and euphony, playing carnival in the hearer's ears. Of this kind of music, which seems to have stimulated the composer to great excitement, Billings said with rapture, —

"It has more than twenty times the power of the old slow tunes; each part straining for mastery and victory, the audience entertained and delighted, their minds surpassingly agitated and extremely fluctuated, sometimes declaring for one part, and sometimes for another. Now the solemn bass demands their attention — next the manly tenor — now, the lofty counter — now, the vola-

tile treble. Now here — now there, now here again. O, ecstatic! Rush on, you sons of harmony!"

Bill Billings, the Yankee disciple of the English psalm-tune composer, soon found an opportunity, however, to emancipate himself somewhat from what we may call the English tradition of psalmody. A great political event, the American Revolution, caused the American colonists to turn against every thing that was British. The innocent old psalm-tunes received a part of the momentary patriotic hatred; and, with the tea, the British tunes were in many instances also thrown overboard. Billings now became the patriotic psalm-singer. He paraphrased the psalms, and transformed them into political hymns, or took such words as he found fit for the expression of the patriotic spirit, and composed or adapted one of his lively psalm-tunes to them. The following words were sung to his well-known tune "Chester." (Example III.)

"Let tyrants shake their iron rod,
And Slavery clank her galling chains:
We'll fear them not, we'll trust in God;
New-England's God forever reigns.

The foe comes on with haughty stride,
Our troops advance with martial noise;
Their veterans flee before our arms,
And generals yield to beardless boys."

Those patriotic hymns were learned and sung by every choir, and in every family, and in the camps of soldiers throughout New England. And thus it happened that some of Billings's tunes, appearing in a time of great political excitement, gave expression to the people's sentiment, and became effective people's-songs.

"Many of the New-England soldiers, who, during the Revolutionary War, were encamped in the Southern States, had many of his popular tunes by heart, and frequently amused themselves by singing them in camp. A gentleman now living in Philadelphia, distinguished for his literary attainments as well as for his musical taste, often speaks of the great pleasure he enjoyed from this source during this period; and says that the name of Billings has been dear to him, and associated with the happiest recollections even to the present time. . . . One secret, no doubt, of the vast popularity Billings's works obtained was the patriotic ardor they breathed; and his tune 'Chester,' it is said, was frequently heard from every fife in the New-England ranks. The spirit of revolution was also manifest in his 'Lamentation over Boston,' his 'Retrospect,' his 'Independence,' his 'Columbia,' and many other pieces."[1]

William Billings became altogether an inventor with regard to musical matters in New England. He is said to have introduced the "viol" (violoncello) in the church-choir, which, no doubt, was then considered a bold step. He began to make use of the "pitch-pipe," in order to avoid those ludicrous scenes and embarrassing moments, which had so often accompanied the old uncertain manner of "striking up the tune," trusting to good chance for reaching a convenient pitch. He is credited with the merit of having originated concerts or musical exhibitions in New England; and, if we may judge by the original bent of his character, his *naïve* musical enthusiasm, and his commonplace ways, ludicrous things must have happened at those exhibitions. He often did not consider it enough to express the emotional sense of the words by means of musical passages: action was joined in order to render the picture more distinct. Thus, for instance, at the words

[1] The Musical Reporter, 1841.

"clap your hands," the members of the choir were requested to perform that action in time with the singing.

"At this distant day [says a writer in the Stoughton Centennial Collection] it is not easy to realize the interest, and, in many places, the well-nigh wild enthusiasm, with which his music was received. His methods of teaching, and style of singing, were as novel and attractive as were his melodies."

In the introduction to an anthem of his to be performed at a concert, we read, "After the audience are seated, and the performers taken their pitch slyly from the leader, the concert begins;" and —

"We've met for a concert of modern invention
To tickle the ear is our present intention.
The audience seated, expected to be treated
With a piece of the Best," —

sings proudly the enchanted leader.

Thus, amid all the confusion that reigned in his time with regard to musical culture, Billings had the good sense to discover, and the courage to proclaim, that music is to be performed, *à priori*, for the ears. Though he could not get farther than to "tickle the ears," and if his music was then capable of fulfilling the delicate mission of tickling the ears of his countrymen, he deserves the credit of having been the means of giving musical development an important start. For though "singing with grace and making melody in the heart" is in itself a sacred art, it becomes unbearable when this art is performed with false, bad, and cracked voices. Billings taught his choir, as far as he could, to sing musically; that is, in time, and with a certain swing and warm expression. As a composer he had the merit of relying on his own inventiveness and resources. He

gave in the best way he was able, but he gave his own. He was an honest, though poor, composer. He did not steal consciously other people's tunes, or twist and deform them, pressing or stretching in the Procrustus bed of the psalm-tune adapters the beautiful original melodies of other masters, in order to fit this or that metre of a hymn or psalm; the emotional meaning of the words of such hymn or psalm being *too often* entirely in opposition to the musical expression of the "adapted" tune. This, the greatest merit of the psalm-tune-composing tanner, has been entirely overlooked by the great majority of his successors.[1]

I shall now pass in review the most eminent of Billings's American contemporaries who distinguished themselves as composers of psalm-tunes and anthems, and as singing-teachers. Among these *Andrew Law* seems to have closely followed Billings by the publication of a collection of tunes. Law was born in 1748 at Cheshire, Conn., and was considered a well-educated man. Early in his life he became a teacher of vocal and instrumental music. My sources fail to mention what instruments he taught, probably the violin, the clarinet, and the flute. Law, though also a self-taught man like Billings, was more thorough in his musical knowledge than many of his contemporaries. The different col-

[1] Other publications: —

Music in Miniature: Containing a collection of psalm-tunes of various metres set in score. Boston, 1779.

The Psalm-Singer's Amusement: Containing a number of fuguing pieces and anthems. Printed and sold by the author at his house near the White Horse. Boston, 1781.

The Suffolk Harmony: Containing tunes, fugues, and anthems. Boston, 1786.

The Continental Harmony: Containing a number of anthems, fugues, and choruses, in several parts, never before published. Printed typographically by Thomas and Andrews. 1794.

lections of church-music he published prove him to have been a singing-teacher of comparatively good taste and judgment. Billings and his style seem not to have had much attraction for him. His aim was more serious. He selected his tunes with more care; and the harmonic arrangement of his pieces is simple and correct, and more in accordance with the spirit of church-music. He did not indulge in much "fuguing." He does not seem to have been very popular either as a compiler or as a composer. Only one of his original tunes, "Archdale," acquired great popularity: it was for a long time reprinted in almost every book of church-music. Law's most efficient work was that of a singing-teacher. He was considered thorough, though somewhat pedantic and tiresome. He did good pioneer-work in the New-England States and in the South, and published several instruction-books on singing.

Probably finding great difficulty in endeavoring to teach his pupils to read notes according to the system then in use, he devised a new kind of musical characters, doing entirely away with the five lines of the staff. But this manner of notation failing to be adopted by the musical public he published an improvement on it, restoring the five lines in a partial or broken manner. (Example IV.) This, however, did not prove more successful. He died in his native town in July, 1821. Gould says that Law "was also the first in this country to insist on the propriety, and adopt the practice, which has since been generally adopted, of giving to female voices the air, or soprano, of the tune; but this was then a new unpopular doctrine." It might have been an unpopular doctrine, but it was not a new one; for in Tufts's and Walter's, as well as in some of Bailey's col-

lections, copied mostly from Playford, the air is given to the soprano. Though the general custom of this time was that men sung the melody and the contralto part, and women the tenor. Taste was still in confusion.

Jacob Kimball, born at Topsfield, Mass., in February, 1761, was a lawyer by profession; but, being an ardent lover of music, he deserted law, and became a music-teacher and composer of church-music. In 1793 he published a book of music, mostly original, called the "Rural Harmony." He taught music in different towns of New England, endeavoring to introduce his own collection. He seems to have been a talented and accomplished man. He was a poet in his way, and wrote some of the psalms in Billings's collection. In his native place he was chosen to sit in the elder's seat, and lead the psalm. He was not a successful man in a worldly sense; for he died in the almshouse at Topsfield, Feb. 26, 1826. The style of his music is like that of his contemporaries: he composed simple psalm-tunes and "fuguing" pieces. He was less original than Billings.

Oliver Holden, the composer of the universally sung tune "Coronation," was a resident of Charlestown, Mass., and was a carpenter and a joiner by trade. Being fond of music, he probably, like Billings, employed the hours of leisure his trade allowed him, to pick up some musical knowledge in the "singing-school." In 1792 he published "The American Harmony" in three and four parts, "the whole entirely new" As he styled himself on the title-page "a teacher of music in Charlestown" he must then have left his trade as a carpenter. Besides teaching, he also opened a store for the sale of music and other books. In 1793 he published "The Union Harmony." He also edited three editions of

the "Worcester Collection." He wrote psalm-tunes, anthems, and odes. His best tunes display a pleasing, honest, devotional expression. He did not possess much originality; and the "fuguing" and harmonic treatment in his set pieces is, like that of his contemporaries, deficient, often commonplace, and incorrect. He no doubt was a better joiner of pine boards than of "fuguing" themes. He died in 1834.

Samuel Holyoke, the son of the Rev. Dr. Holyoke of Salem, born in 1771 at Boxford, Mass., was an indefatigable laborer in the field of music. He must have commenced musical practice at an early age; for when he was about twenty he already came forth with the publication of a collection of sacred music, entitled "Harmonia Americana, Containing a concise introduction to the grounds of Music, with a variety of airs suitable to Divine Worship, and the use of Musical Societies, consisting of three and four parts. Boston, Jan. 24, 1791." In the preface to this collection he says, regarding "fuguing" music, —

"Perhaps some may be disappointed that fuguing pieces are in general omitted. But the principal reason why few were inserted was the trifling effect produced by that sort of music; for the parts falling in, one after another, each conveying a different idea, confound the sense, and render the performance a mere jargon of words. The numerous pieces of this kind extant cannot be a sufficient apology for omitting them here."

This passage in condemnation of fuguing music was perhaps inspired by the author's father, who may have often been annoyed by that style. On the strength of this preface J. Moore calls Holyoke "one of the reformers who undertook to do away with the fugue in sacred music." And N. Gould said "that he stood

aloof more than any other of that day [Gould already made Law stand aloof] from singing fuguing music." These are all mere phrases. Holyoke, as a composer of church-music, was not better than his contemporaries; and some of his pieces have as much "jingle" about them than those of any other New-England psalm-tune writer.

Holyoke taught vocal and instrumental music, probably the violin, flute, and clarinet; for it is said that in the latter part of his life he made use of the clarinet in his classes while teaching singing, and that the tone of his instrument was as harsh as that of his voice. He also published instrumental pieces. His well-known tune "Arnheim" was composed when he was only fourteen; and it was the last tune he sang a few days before his death, which occurred in 1816.

Daniel Read, born in 1757 at Rehobath, was a comb-manufacturer at Hartford, Conn., and a composer and teacher of music. He published about 1771 the "American Singing book, or a New and Easy Guide to the art of Psalmody, devised for the use of Singing Schools in America," and in 1793 "Columbian Harmony." Among his compositions we find simple psalm-tunes and "fuguing pieces." Of this latter style he must have been very fond. He was an awkward harmonist. Several of his tunes are still used by some congregations.

Following the lead of the above psalm-tune composers we find *Timothy Swan*, born in Laffield, Conn., in 1757, and known as the composer of the popular tunes "China" and "Poland." He published in 1785 "Federal Harmony," and in 1821 "New-England Harmony." He died in 1842.

Jacob French, a teacher in Stoughton, Mass., born in

1754. He published in 1822 "Harmony of Harmony." On the title-page of this he calls himself "*Musico Theorico;*" but in spite of this he was not much of a harmonist or contrapuntist.

Oliver Shaw, the blind singer and popular psalm-tune composer and singing-teacher, was a native of Middleborough, Mass., and died in 1848. He also wrote some ballads.

These were followed by *Babcock*, *Belknap*, *Benham*, *Brown*, *Brownson*, *Chandler*, *Dutton*, *Edson*, *Jocelin*, *Jenks*, *King*, *Lee*, *Oliver*, *Stove*, and many others.

Thus with William Billings burst forth a rich growth of American psalm-tune composers. It is to the historian so far the most interesting epoch of American musical development. There was original life, great impulse, and energy about it. It was infancy in art; but it was alive, and seemed promising.

CHAPTER IV.

MUSICAL THEORY, INSTRUCTION IN SINGING, MUSICAL GRAMMARS, DICTIONARIES, ETC.

WILLIAM BILLINGS and his contemporaries were self-taught men; and, like the great majority of self-taught musicians, they laid great stress and artistic importance on what they, after great trouble, had succeeded in accomplishing: though what they accomplished was, on the whole, rather insignificant when compared with the labors of any true composer. Not having had any school tradition to compare what *they* did with what *others* before them had already done much better, they, in their inexperience and *naïveté*, considered themselves original minds, and their productions "the greatest things the world ever saw." America, since the days of Billings, has been rich in such would-be original geniuses, either in theoretical or practical musical matters. They, in one or the other way, all have succeeded in finding, for a time, warm adherents, for, "*dans le royaume des aveugles, le borgne est roi.*" They were generally proclaimed by their partisans to be the creators of important new musical eras;[1] and thus it came that the historian who looks for some distinct epochs,

[1] These self-taught musicians, both native and foreign, have often been absurdly termed the Napoleons, the Washingtons, the Wellingtons, of music. I have not yet read of a musical Alexander, Cæsar, or Attila, though they may have escaped my attention.

marked by definite artistic deeds, — the logical results of a gradual and rational musical development among the people, — finds his searching steps continually entangled in the meshes of the fictitious overgrowth of the American "important musical eras." He unexpectedly lights on would-be musical era creators in all latitudes of this great continent, from Bangor to New Orleans, from New York to San Francisco.

But Billings and his contemporaries really mark an epoch in American musical development. Though they were mere imitators of such musical forms as through English sources came under their notice, yet they were honest men, and helped to stir up in the native mind a desire to create new tunes. They were not satisfied with the writing of simple psalm-tunes: they indulged freely in "fuguing," and seemed very proud of their deeds, though they had not the least idea of the formal construction of a regular fugue. Their efforts were at the time appreciated by their countrymen. Their music-books sold readily. The only thing that was lacking to enable one to pronounce the whole movement a success was the want of judgment and experience in matters of musical theory. They published their amateurish attempts as soon as completed. They endeavored to write according to such rules as they found and could understand. When the rule was in opposition to their *savoir-faire*, they, like Billings, took refuge in the "poetical license;" or they became so completely fettered by these rules that they were totally hampered in their timid steps. It will perhaps be interesting to glance at such theoretical resources as were at the disposal of these "Yankee psalm-tune smiters" or "corn-stack fiddlers," as the English often called them.

The field was not a large one: it consisted of a few rudimentary rules on singing by note, and of a dictionary of the most indispensable musical terms.

Their "concise rules" for singing embraced: the gamut; the "cliffs;" the value of the different musical characters; notes and corresponding rests; the staff; the point of addition (dotted notes); the ledger lines; the intervals, concords, and discords, called characters; the flat, sharp, and natural; the slur (this they often confound with the tie); the direct √ (now obsolete); the bar; the double bar; the repeat; the double ending 1°, 2°; the close; the figure 3 marking triplets; the brace; the hold; time and its moods, viz., common-time-mood, triple-time mood, and compound-time mood; syncopation, or driving notes; the several major and minor keys; the transposition of keys; the graces in music, such as the marks of distinction (which we call *staccato*), the trill, the beat, the turn; transition, or breaking notes (which consisted of "gracefully sliding from one note to another"). Then some general remarks on singing, pronunciation, a list of the most used musical terms, and "tuning the voice," with practical exercises of the scale and other intervals. This formed the general stock of musical knowledge as required by these first American psalm-tune teachers. Tansur's books, as I have already had occasion to say, were the great source from which they took their scant knowledge.

The most difficult part of their rules was the explanation and teaching of the "gamut," and the key of a piece.

The following form, representing the compass of the bass, tenor or counter-tenor, and treble voices, was,

with more or less variation, printed at the beginning of each psalm-tune collection. (Example V.)

All these music-teachers, who spoke so wisely about the importance of the gamut, were most surely in the dark about the meaning of a key represented by the contraction of the different syllables or terms of a note, such as G-*sol-re-ut*. If they ventured to go to Tansur — their great authority in musical theory — to find an explanation of this technical term, they did not get much comfort. To the question of the scholar, "Why hath C three different Terms in the old scale of Musick as, C-*fa-ut?* The Master [Tansur in his "Musical Grammar"] answers: I suppose such differences are only set to distinguish the three several Systems or Parts of the Scales; as Bass, Tenor, and Treble; all being in effect as one and the same, as Octaves or Eights to each other." Tansur did not know the origin of the term. It is derived from the old system of solmization, based upon the hexachord *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la;* and at every fourth note a new hexachord enters, the distinctive mark of the *mi-fa* always occurring between the third and fourth note: thus the different hexachords of the whole system were enchained one in another.[1]

When Tansur wrote his "Musical Grammar" the system of hexachords was discarded; and, as the modern diatonic scale of seven notes was taught, the two semitones which occur in the modern scale being invariably called *mi*, the syllables *ut* and *re* being rejected altogether, using thus only *sol, la, mi, fa*, the old terms were a remnant of an entirely different scale-system, of which teachers and scholars did not understand the meaning.

[1] See plan of system in Ritter's History of Music, second edition, p. 49.

Christopher Simpson, always practical and clear, says,[1] "A voice doth express a sound best, when it pronounceth some word or syllable with it. For this cause, as also for order and distinction sake, six syllables were used in former times, viz., Ut. Re. Mi. Fa. Sol. La." He then refers to the plan of the hexachord, as mentioned above, and goes on to say, "Four of these, to wit, Mi. fa. sol. la.[2] (taken in their significancy), are necessary assistants to the right tuning of the degrees of Sound, as will presently appear. The other two, Ut and Re, are superfluous, and therefore laid aside by most modern teachers." *Mi* becomes now movable; for, says our author, "one must first find out where Mi is to be placed, which, being known, the places of the other three are known by consequence, for Mi. hath always fa. sol. la. both above it and under it, in such an order and manner as you see them set in the Margin. Here is the rule for placing the Mi: 'The first and most natural place for Mi is B. But if you find in that line or space that belongs to B, a flat, then Mi is to be placed on E. If E have also a flat, then you must place your Mi in A.'" This is all simple, and easily understood; no rambling about it, in the manner of Tansur and consorts.

LA
SOL
FA
MI
LA
SOL
FA

Another point of importance in musical composition — viz., passages of consecutive fifths and octaves, which occur so often in the pieces of Billings and contemporaries — is to be explained here. Old English musical authors — such as Morley, Bevin, Simpson, and even

[1] Compendium of Practical Musick, p. 3.
[2] The tetrachord of the old Greek system.

Playford — distinctly say that a progression of two fifths or two octaves is not allowed. Tansur adds to this rule the following remark: —

"I told you in Rule III., that Fifths and Eighths, were not to be taken together, neither Rising nor Falling; which may not be done by any means in two Parts, by Reason they will clog the Ear: But two Fifths or two Eighths (and no more) may be taken together in Three or more Parts (when it cannot be well avoided) rather than spoil the *Air*."

The reader will now be able to understand Billings's remark about the "poetical license." Thus the ugly consecutive fifths to be found in the psalm-tunes and anthems of the first American composers were not made accidentally: they did it on the authority of a popular English writer, and made ample and frequent use of the "license." As their "air" was in continual danger of being spoiled by the avoidance of fifths and octaves they endeavored to save the "air" at the cost of the sensibility of the ears. Fifths appeared covered and uncovered. There is a passage in Tansur's grammar which may with great justice be applied to Tansur himself. Speaking of the habit of "pricking down a Tune without a Cliff" he reprovingly exclaims, —

"This is a thing too much practised in our kingdom at this time, to the great Ruin and Confusion of many a good Composition, by many conceited Coxcombs, who lead others in the dark, being blindfolded themselves with Conceit and Ignorance; and scorn to be contradicted from their own Way. Thus they lead others into Error, and instead of ornamenting a Church with Psalmody, they put the whole Congregation into Confusion; and instead of rendering Divine Musick Angelical, they make it contemptable enough; to the great Grief of such as know the Excellency thereof."

Just what happened in the New-England churches on the authority of Tansur's teachings.

Billings very diligently cultivated that style of music called "fuguing;" but it was doing him great injustice, as many American writers on music have done, to point him out as the originator of "fuguing music." Billings simply borrowed the form from those English composers of psalm-tunes and anthems that fell into his hands. The style suited his easily excitable imagination and restless musical mood.

Concerning the true meaning of the fugue in its different forms, there existed great confusion among our early church-composers and psalm-tune singing-teachers. The origin of this confusion must again be attributed to Tansur. In his "Musical Grammar" all those contrapuntal forms, such as the fugue, the canon, the imitation, are wonderfully mixed up, and every thing is called a "Fuge." Ch. Simpson, in his above-mentioned work, gives, on the whole, a good and clear definition of the "fugue."

"This is some Point (as we term it in Musick) consisting of 4, 5, 6, or any other number of Notes; began by some one single Part, and then seconded by a following Part, repeating the same, or such like Notes; sometimes in the Unison or Octave, but more commonly and better in 4th or 5th above, or below the leading Part. Next comes the Third Part, repeating the same notes, commonly in an Octave or Unison to the Leading Part. Then follows the Fourth Part, in resemblance to the second, etc."

Of the canon he says, —

"It is a Fuge, so bound up, or restrained, that the following Part or Parts must precisely repeat the same Notes, with the same degrees rising or falling, which were expressed by the leading Part; and because it is tyed to so strict a rule, it is thereupon called a *Canon*."

The author establishes thus a distinct difference between fugue and canon. John Playford, in his "Introduction to the Skill of Music," [1] says nearly the same thing as Simpson regarding the definition of a "Fuge." Of the canon he simply says, that it is "the noblest sort of fuguing, the method of which is to answer exactly Note for Note to the end;" and then refers the student to Elway Bevin's book, "Brief and Short Introduction to the Art of Musick, to teach how to make Discant of all proportions that are in use, etc. London, 1631."

Playford also mentions "another diminutive sort of fuguing, called Imitation, or Report: which is, when you begin Counterpoint, and answer the Treble in some few Notes, as you find occasion, when you set a Bass to it." All this is clear enough: fugue, canon, and imitation belong to the same style of form, yet differ from each other in some essential points of treatment. But now comes Tansur, and in a most amateurish manner effaces all lines of recognition that distinguish a regular fugue from a canon or an imitation or reports. He says, —

"To compose a Canon, you must first prick down your Fuge (or such a Quantity of Notes as you would have to lead your Point) in *one* Part; and then carry the same Notes forward, and prick them down in another Part, either in the Unison, 3d, 4th, 5th, or 6th etc., above, or below the leading Part.

"A Canon is a perpetual Fuge, i.e., Parts always flying one before another; the following Parts repeating the very same Notes (either in Unison, or higher, or lower) as the leading Part, and because it is carried on by so strict a Rule, it is called a Canon; which is the superlative, or highest Degree of Musical Composition.

"A single Fuge or Imitation, is when Parts imitate one another.

[1] In the twelfth edition of his work the third book, "The Art of Descant," was revised by Henry Purcell.

A Double Fuge, is when two or several Points, or Fuges fall in, one after the other."

The only thing tolerably clear here is the explanation of the canon. But what a mixing up of subject-matter when Tansur attempts to speak of a "Fuge!" The part that leads the subject he calls "the Fuge;" the imitation is, in his eyes, a "single Fuge," and a double fugue "when several Parts fall in."

What a pity, that, at the time when a desire to create new tunes and anthems awoke in the minds of American psalm-singers, such unhealthy, badly sifted, superficial stuff was the only nourishment accessible to them! They were mere children regarding musical science, and indiscriminately took and imitated all that they found used and popular in England. Tansur, and musicians of his stamp, were then the most popular church-composers in England; and Tansur's superficial theoretical compilations were undoubtedly widely followed by the mass of English music-teachers. What a degeneration in the musical culture of English musicians since the appearance of Simpson's and Bevin's practical works! The influence of Tansur's practical teachings for a long while exercised a most confusing effect on the attempts of American composers; and their efforts in composition, standing on a level with their theoretical knowledge, became a very unsafe ground on which to build a new art-development.

William Billings says in the "Musical Dictionary" of his "New-England Psalm-Singer," following Tansur, "A Canon is a perpetual Fuge," and "Fuge or Fuging — Notes flying off after the same." Fuguing he considered "the most ingenious and generally the most grateful both to Performers and Auditors of any Part in Composition."

In "The Singing-Master" the canon is still a "perpetual Fuge," but is "not esteemed with us so much as formerly." "Fuguing" music affords the composer more freedom; and "its beauties cannot be numbered, and is universally pleasing."

In "The Massachusetts Compiler," published in 1795 by Holden, Holyoke, and Gram, a tolerably good definition is given of the fugue; and, as a practical example, illustrating a fugue, a part of a piece adapted from a composition by W. Shield is given. This wonderful "Fuge" consists of the most simple and commonplace imitations, as Shield himself designated such passages in his book on "Harmony." There is absolutely nothing of the fugue about the given example; and, I am sure, had the able Shield seen his simple piece dubbed a "Fuge," he would have been greatly amused at the childish *naïveté* and ignorance of the American authors of "The Massachusetts Compiler." And yet these were some of the foremost church-composers of New England.

In the rules on musical composition, as published in the "introductions" of the psalm-tune collections, unimportant things were unnecessarily and often very pedantically amplified, while important matter was presented in a very superficial way. Still, the abstract, theoretical knowledge, compiled from foreign sources, is, on the whole, a great deal better given than the practical illustrations. But, gradually, a greater desire for a more thorough study of the works of other European writers became prevalent among the more serious psalm-tune composers. Tansur, Williams, & Co. began to be put aside as insufficient and too "old-fashioned." A publication, already mentioned above, may be re-

garded as an effort in the new direction, viz., "The Massachusetts Compiler." The authors of the book say in the preface, —

"Many American votaries of sacred music have long expressed their wishes for a compendium of the genuine principles of the science. At the present period it becomes necessary that greater attention be paid to every means for improving that important part of divine worship, as *good, musical emigrants* are daily seeking an asylum in this country."

The compilers say that the theoretical part of this publication was compiled from the following works: —

"Eléments de Musique théorique et pratique eclaircis et simplifiés," par D'Alembert.

"Dictionnaire de Musique," par J. J. Rousseau.

"Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen-Künste," by J. G. Sulzer.

"Treatise on the Art of Music," by W. Jones.

"An Essay on Musical Expression," by Ch. Avison.

"Treatise on Counterpoint," by J. J. Feux (Fux).

"Elements on Thorough-Bass and Composition," by D. E. Miller.

This comparatively formidable list of some of the best works on music published in Europe during the eighteenth century — books which the compilers profess to have consulted in arranging their publication — gives proof of a desire on the part of American musicians to leave the old rut, and search among more reliable sources for thorough information. The theoretical contents of "The Massachusetts Compiler" show, however, that very little of the above works found its way into their book. Of D'Alembert's, Sulzer's, and Rousseau's works (if the authors of the "Compiler" knew these works at all: perhaps the German co-editor, Hans Gram, knew about them), a few faint traces are

to be perceived, — perhaps a little filtering through an English source; of Fux's, absolutely nothing. And judging by their own crude attempts at counterpoint the authors of "The Massachusetts Compiler" were not able, even if Fux's "Gradus ad Parnassum" had been in their hands, to understand it.

The chapter on singing, in "The Massachusetts Compiler," is perhaps the first effort made in America to do away with *mi, fa, sol, la,* the old way of sol-fa-ing, the movable *mi,* and to give each note of the scale its name corresponding with a fixed pitch. The movable *mi* seemed to them illogical.

"Since the principle of allowing thirteen possible semitones in any octave, became an unexceptionable standard in composition, the former supposed advantages of the tetrachorded octave, were mistrusted, and that method of solfeggio was finally left out, as false and insufficient. Those, who are yet in favor of the old machine, might change their opinion from the painful conviction, that they never can sing any part of a composition, where the octave, or pitch is changing, unless they learn it habitually by hearing it sung or played. The case is simply that if justice shall be done to the principle and intonation of *fa, sol, la, fa, sol, la, mi,* no change of the octave can be duly noticed, or effected; e. g., in the key of C, its 4th is F, and both notes are called *fa*; but if F is accidentally sharped, the singer yet calls it *fa,* and the master calls it *fa;* hence that note must receive a doubtful and erroneous performance. . . .

"In the newer method of denominating the different parts of an octave, either by seven different syllables, letters or cyphers, the essential improvement, viz.: of dividing the octave into thirteen semitones, and of knowing when, and where one of those semitones, in a harmony is taking its rank or place, as a characteristic part, in a new octave, is not, from those seven characters, so conspicuous as might be wished, yet one advantage is certainly obtained, viz.: that of having seven different characters for seven different objects in the octave."

The editors of "The Massachusetts Compiler" then consider the methods as used in the German, Italian, and French schools. All that they say on this point is intelligent, sensible, and true. It points out to the New-England singing-teacher the direction where progress is possible, and where a reform ought to be introduced.[1]

Another custom which must have created confusion in the minds of many American music-students was the antiquated theoretical treatment of the two representative keys or modes, the major and the minor. The source of that treatment is to be looked for in Playford, who says, —

"A Key is a Song or Tune depending on a Sound given, as a Sermon does on a Text, and when it ends right, it gives such satisfaction to the Ear, that nothing more is expected, like a period at the end of a sentence, when the sense is full, and no more depending on it.

"There are but two keys in musick, one flat and the other sharp, which is sufficient to write down any melancholy or cheerful song whatsoever. The melancholy or *flat* key, without either flat or sharp, at the beginning is A-*re* or A-*la-mi-re* (our A-minor); the *sharp* or cheerful key, without either flat or sharp at the beginning is C-*fa-ut*, or C-*sol-fa* (our C-major)."

Tansur copied nearly word for word the above explanation of the two keys, and from him the American psalm-tune singing-teacher learnt his lesson on the

[1] Mr. Thomas, the well-known conductor, in an article "Musical Possibilities" published in "The Century Magazine" for March, 1881, thought fit to condemn the method of the movable *do*, and declared that future progress was only possible by means of the fixed pitch method. This attack on the movable *do* system aroused quite "a tempest in a teapot" among the music-teachers of the grammar-schools. Mr. Thomas's explanation of the fixed pitch system, however, is not near so lucid and logical as that of the above editors of "The Massachusetts Compiler," date, — 1795.

subject in question. A long time passed before they were able to throw off this unsatisfactory theoretical treatment of the two tonalities. In the collection of psalm-tunes, "Harmony of Harmony," compiled and published as late as 1802 by Jacob French, who calls himself on the title-page "*Musico Theorico*," the key of every tune is designated by a letter printed above; thus C-major or G-major by ♯C or ♯G, A-minor or E-minor, by ♭A or ♭E.

In general the harmonic treatment of the minor mode seems never to have been rightly understood by Billings and his contempararies. The relation between tonic, dominant, and sub-dominant was never sufficiently clear to them; and yet they seem to have had a great preference for the "melancholy key," which, by their unsatisfactory, crude harmonization, they managed to render still more "melancholy." (See Example VI.)

In the introductions and musical dictionaries attached to the first American psalm-tune collections some very curious things are to be found regarding singing, composition, and musical terms. One gives the following explanation of a "Voluntary:" "It is an air played on the organ, and is performed in church before the service begins, to sooth the minds and calm the passions of the audience for the fit worship of God."[1] Our present explanation of the "Voluntary" would run this way: to rouse the passions, to disturb the minds of the audience, to make them unfit for the worship of God. The "Harpischord is a wire instrument with keys like an organ." This leaves a large margin for the imagination to build up such an instrument. The same author gives the following direction for the composition

[1] Jenks's Collection.

of a chorus. "When fuging the Bass should be grave and majestic — the Tenor clear and engaging — the counter shrill and melodious — and the Treble soft and delicate." A wonderful harmony that must have produced.

As the teaching of singing formed the principal occupation of the psalm-tune teacher, a few extracts from their books may be useful in order to give the reader an idea of their practice; especially as these early American singing-teachers, though, on the whole, crude and amateurish in their method of treating the voice, were instrumental in laying the foundation of that branch of musical art in which Americans have so far succeeded best.

Jocelyn [1] says, —

"In order to make any considerable proficiency in psalmody the learner should proceed gradually; beginning with a few psalm-tunes, in which he should continue till he has become perfect, both as to the air and time.

"In singing, the notes should not be struck and ended abruptly, like the report of a smith's hammer; nor yet in a dull and heavy manner, by beginning half a note under, and painfully arriving at the true sound: — the low notes, indeed, should be sounded full, but the others ought to be struck and ended soft, swelling each sound as the air of the tune may require. This method of sounding is easier for the voice, and, if performed with spirit, will be more pleasing to the ear: — and it may here be noted, that swelling a sound, and raising a tone, are essentially different. — Notes of two beats will admit a double swell, the first swell the fullest, the other soft like an echo. Where no rests are set, the music should go on without intermission — a cessation between the notes is very hurtful to the air — it makes the music heavy and dull, and the audience impatient; — if allowed anywhere, it is at the end of lines in Psalmtunes.

[1] Chorister's Companion.

"All the notes given to one syllable, should be sung with the lips and teeth asunder, and, if possible, at one breath, which should be previously taken for the purpose. — A long chain of notes under a slur, should be sung somewhat softer than plain notes, being lightly warbled in the throat." . . . Let the voice be clear and smooth as possible, neither forcing the sound through the nose, nor blowing through the teeth with the mouth shut; . . . a trembling of the voice is also carefully to be avoided. All the high notes should be sounded soft, but not faint; the low notes full, but not harsh; and let all be done with ease and freedom, endeavoring to cultivate a musical voice; observing, for instance, the sweet sound of the violin, the soft melody of the flute, and the tuneful notes of the nightingale."

But as there are no nightingales in America, how were the scholars to imitate them?

Billings's directions for the required proportion of a chorus were accepted at this time as the general standard. Concerning the character of the different voices, in regard to which I have already given some extracts from different singing-teachers' methods, Billings says, —

"To the bass belongs a bold and majestic accent, to the tenor, a firm and manly style; the counter should be soft and insinuating, and the treble peculiarly sweet and delicate. When the bass notes rise above the tenor, they should be sung soft, as tenor, and the tenor full as bass."

Singing with expression was not alone confined to the voice, "but the whole demeanor should conform to the subject; for it is vain to expect that sensibility will be excited in others which is wanting in ourselves. For example, the majestic and sublime must be accompanied with a sublimity of air and voice; and, in like manner, the grave and the gay, the melancholy and cheerful, with their correspondent tones and deportment; or the

performance, instead of satisfaction and delight, will be productive of displeasure and disgust." [1] And O. Holden says "that soft music is always accompanied with graceful motion, just expression, proper accent, and captivating harmony. On the other hand, hard singing is attended with convulsive motion, bad pronunciation, misapplied accent, and disgustful jarring. The latter is too just a description of the present mode of singing, occasioned in a great measure by a mistaken idea which many entertain, — that good music consists principally of a great quantity of sound."

These teachings were gradually accepted by the American people when singing in public worship; and I have often wondered, why, in large congregations, such a small, whimsical quantity, and sentimental quality, of tone was produced. And in conversation with educated Americans regarding singing in church I have often been struck with remarks similar in bearing to the above rules. We want "sweet music," says one of the early psalm-tune teachers,[2] —

"Some of those who profess to understand composition, insert discords so that the concords may be the sweeter; but if those authors would but consider, I dare presume they never would insert any more, of any length, for in composing and singing, we should strive to imitate the heavenly host, who are continually praising God and the Lamb, where there is neither discord or jar, but all the music is sweet, perfectly sweet."

He therefore cut the discords out of his tunes, and altered others, in order to bring them nearer his idea of perfect musical sweetness.

Many of the early psalm-tune composers and compilers printed after their names "*Musico Theorico.*"

[1] Elias Mann's Collection. [2] Jacob French.

They found this in Tansur's collection "Royal Melody." He defines this title as that of "A Person who studies musick, writes Treatises, and explains dark passages therein; and publikly gives Instruction by Practice." This may have flattered their vanity; but they failed to write treatises, and when they attempted to explain "dark passages" such passages became still darker; but it was a title, a "handle" to a name.

The numerous singing-schools and choirs that sprang up in all parts of New England created a brisk market for new books, and offered the new profession — the psalm-tune singing teacher — much, and, in some cases, remunerative, occupation. As we have seen above, the tanner, the butcher, the carpenter, the unsuccessful lawyer, the farmer, etc., who happened to have a tolerably good voice, a good ear to catch the psalm-tunes, and aptitude enough to learn the few rudimentary rules which were current regarding note-reading, became composers and teachers of psalmody, and went from town to town to teach music, and to peddle "new and never-before-printed" psalm-tune collections. They were, on the whole, favorites with the young people of the "singing-school," who managed to get out of that institution all the amusement possible. Those shrewd Yankee psalm-tune peddlers knew very well that their pupils wanted lively "fuguing" tunes, and they found it more profitable to provide their customers with the ware they were willing to pay for. Secular music was not much cultivated then, though a few English ballads, and pieces in the march and dance form, had found their way into the parlors of some rich families. Billings and his contemporaries adapted all these secular forms to sacred words. It would be wrong, from an æsthetic

point of view, to call their music *bona fide* sacred, as they did not know where to draw the line of demarcation between sacred and secular styles. Billings, his contemporaries, and immediate successors composed *naïvely* any music that sounded melodious to them. As the sacred contents of the psalm or hymn were wedded to the tune, that was guaranty enough that the piece belonged to the sacred style.

With incorrect music, ill-trained singers, and incompetent professors, the ordinary church-choir singing must have been intolerable to educated ears. The proportion of women to men was about twenty to one hundred and thirteen. The boys and counter-tenors sang the air with the sopranos, and the alto part was generally intrusted to men with falsetto voices. Great opposition was made when it was proposed to have the melody sung by women, on the ground that men had a prescriptive right to lead, and that women were forbidden to take the first part in song or any other religious service. Solo singing by women was unheard of in churches. Leaders of choirs who followed the directions given for beating time in the "Farmers' Evening Entertainment" (S. Howe, Northampton, 1804), must have found it difficult to keep the singers together: —

"To Beat Crotchets in common Time, let the fingers fall on the table six inches, then bring the heel of the hand down gently, then raising it a little higher, throw open the fingers to begin the next bar. For triple Time, let the fingers fall on the table, then the heel of the hand, then raise the whole hand six inches, keeping the fingers straight, which fills the bar."[1]

[1] Charles C. Perkins, History of the Handel and Haydn Society.

CHAPTER V.

RE-ACTION AGAINST THE BILLINGS SCHOOL, INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC, MUSICAL SOCIETIES.

But these singing-teachers were not allowed to have it all their own way. Some clergymen of a more serious cast of mind, and anxious to see a simpler and chaster style of psalm-singing introduced into worship, began to make opposition to this "fuguing rioting" with the sacred words of the psalms or hymns. The following passage, taken from Hirst's "Music in the Church," fitly expresses the views of the opponents of the so-called Billings style: —

"Indeed, all tunes technically called 'fuguing,' especially if elaborated, are considered by many unsuitable to the simplicity of congregational worship. Many tunes cast in this mould, and introduced in our congregations, are utterly worthless; hard, naked, and unnatural strains having no character, excepting a burlesque on harmony, and no assignable object, save to show the ignorance of their composers, and bad state of their performers. Such a style of composition is often selected by raw amateurs as proof of superior genius. Persons of this calibre fancy themselves inspired with sublime strains, and are impotent to make them known. They must therefore dash off from an eminence. But they soon find, in a general way, their resting-place on the spot where they ought to have commenced their flight; and they thereby render their final elevation doubtful. But even when good, tunes with an excess of fugue are not to be recommended for general use."

In the ranks of those who protested against the fuguing style we also find professors of colleges, and other men of cultivation, who endeavored to penetrate somewhat deeper into the nature of music and its true function when connected with church-service. The histories of music by Hawkins and Burney, Avison's "On Musical Taste," the writings of Busby, and other good works published at this time in England, found their way to New England. Some of Handel's choruses, and anthems of good English composers, began to be admired and adapted by the American compiler. We now find in the psalm-tune collections, pieces by Purcell, Dr. Blow, Dr. Arne, Handel; even Mozart, Haydn, and Pleyel are adapted. Of course these pieces were copied from English collections. Among those men who vehemently, and apparently very successfully, protested against the Billings style of music, were *John Hubbard*, professor of mathematics and natural philosophy at Dartmouth College, and *Francis Brown* (the father of President A. G. Brown of Hamilton College), also at that time connected with Dartmouth College.

Professor Hubbard was an ardent admirer of music. He composed several anthems, and "had in his possession," says Gould, "more means for acquiring a musical education than any other man in America, having more English publications and treatises on the science of music than any other individual; many of which are now to be found in the library of the Handel Society of Dartmouth College." Professor Hubbard was instrumental in the establishment of that society, and was its first president. In 1807, a short time before his death, he "pronounced an Essay on Music, before the Middlesex Musical Society." The essay is an intelli-

gent, philosophical paper on music; the æsthetic views are based on Avison, Brown, Beattie, Burney, etc. He treated of melody, harmony, expression, and accent as the essential parts of music. I will give an extract from the essay, relating to American composers. Our author finds in music "the same variety of style as in poetry or prose; viz., the *sublime*, the *beautiful*, the *nervous*, the *concise*, the *dry*, and the *bombastic*. . . . This latter consists in labored notes and strains, disconnected from any exalted ideas, or in attempting to communicate some low idea which cannot be expressed by notes. In this style our unfortunate country has been peculiarly fruitful. Almost every pedant, after learning the eight notes, has commenced author. With a genius sterile as the deserts of Arabia, he has attempted to rival the great masters of music. On the leaden strings of dulness, he has attempted to soar into those regions of science never penetrated but by real genius. From such distempered imaginations no regular productions can be expected. The unhappy writers, after torturing every note in the octave, have fallen into oblivion, and have generally outlived their insignificant works. (No other proof of this fact need be adduced than the ephemeral publications with which New England has been inundated. Many of these have never lived to see a second edition.) To the great injury of true religion, this kind of music has been introduced into our places of public worship. Devotion, baffled by its destructive presence, has fled from the unhallowed sound. Among the most prominent faults of this style, we may record the common fugue." Professor Hubbard speaks now of the fugue as a hinderance to the understanding of the words, and thinks

"such fugues must be a perversion. They cannot affect the heart, nor inform the understanding. . . . But our modern innovators have not stopped here. From the midnight revel, from the staggering bacchanal, from the profane altar of Comus, they have stolen the prostituted Air, and with sacrilegious hands have offered it in the temple of *Jehovah.* (If any person will take the trouble of examining the songs of the Beggar's Opera, he will find from what sources many of our modern tunes are derived.) Such profanation must wound every feeling heart. Devotion ever assumes a dignity. It cannot delight in the tinkling bustle of unmeaning sounds. The air of a catch, a glee, a dance, a march, or common ballad is very improper for the worship of the Most High. . . . Many respectable clergymen in New England have been almost determined to omit music in public worship. To their great sorrow they have observed that the effects of a most solemn discourse were often obliterated by closing with improper music." How true all this is! and how refreshing to read this indignant outburst of an American college professor of mathematics and natural philosophy against a custom, unæsthetic and unprincipled in the highest degree, practised either from ignorance or solely from pecuniary motives, and consequently demoralizing in its effects on the development of church-music! Professor Hubbard's remarks ought to have been printed in large letters, and hung in the organ-gallery, in sight of the organist and choir, in every house of worship in this great Republic.

To the above timely remarks by Professor Hubbard I will add a few passages from "An Address on Music delivered before the Handel Society, Dartmouth Col

lege, August, 1809, by Francis Brown." The author, after having given a philosophical view of the functions of music as understood by him, goes on to say, —

"Unhappily, the greater part of those in our country who have undertaken to write music have been ignorant of its nature. Their pieces have but little variety and little meaning. They are as well adapted to one sentiment as to another; or, more truly, they have no adaptation to any sentiment. And, as they are written without any meaning, they are performed without expression. They may gratify the uncultivated ear for a short time; but, as soon as their novelty wears off, they produce satiety, they fall into neglect, and are soon lost in forgetfulness.

"Another very serious fault in the greater part of American music denominated sacred, is that its movements and air are calculated rather to provoke levity than to enkindle devotion. Religion has its pleasures, but they are of the grave and solemn kind. They are widely distant from any thing light, frivolous, or gay. And the language which expresses them should resemble them in its style. . . .

"If the aspersions which in Europe have been so liberally thrown upon American genius had been confined to the musical talents we have displayed, they would have been, to say no more, less undeserved. No nation, indeed, in any quarter of the globe can boast of a greater number (!) of composers than our own. Our collections of psalmody are as numerous as we would wish; and they contain almost every thing — but that which is worthy of the name of sacred music. . . . It is not denied, nor doubted, that the musical talents of our countrymen are as great as those of the Europeans. But, like talent of every other kind, they lie dormant in the soul, unless the proper incentive to their exertion be applied. This incentive has been wanting in this country. Our best musicians, instead of being awakened to exertion by a call for splendid talents, have been discouraged by the increasing prevalence of a corrupt taste. Bad music has been preferred to good. Billings was able for many years to take the palm from Handel, and recently he has in turn been supplanted. . . . By what means has the evil risen to its present height? In the first place, the strong passion for novelty, which too much prevails

in this country, has induced many to reject ancient music merely because it was old. In the second place, a large portion of those who belong to the higher classes in society, females especially, have considered it humiliating to bear a portion in the music of the sanctuary. In the third place, sacred music has been abandoned almost entirely to the young; and, in the fourth place, little or no attention has been given to the characters and qualifications of musical instructors."

The opposition to the Billings style of church-music became so great in many churches of New England that the compilers of psalm-tune collections went so far as to exclude, and, in my opinion, with great injustice, all tunes written by American composers. Thus the collection "Templi Carmina," songs of the temple, and afterwards called "The Bridgewater Collection," published in 1812 in Boston, was all made up of tunes and anthems taken from English publications. This collection reached many editions. The trustees of the now celebrated Boston Handel and Haydn Society gave the following recommendation to the edition of this collection issued in 1816:—

"The Trustees of the Handel and Haydn Society, having seen the work entitled "Songs of the Temple, or Bridgewater Collection of Sacred Music," could not refrain from expressing the satisfaction they derived from the examination of its pages. For beauty of style, justness of adaptation, and correctness of harmony, it is equalled by few, if any, and excelled by none, of which they have any knowledge. Much praise is due to the compilers for their great research and superior taste, etc."

This was throwing cold water on the efforts of the native psalm-tune composer, and was no doubt productive of much ire in their minds. Thus, when choruses of Handel's "Messiah" began to be admired by the New-England chorus-singer, the ludicrous, unsymmetri-

cal "fuguing" pieces of Billings and contemporaries had no longer much chance of success. Their music, criticised with severity by the best judges, was gradually laid aside. Thus the business of the American composer became restricted to the writing of those short, sacred glees, called psalm or hymn tunes, harmonized in the most simple manner. The words of the psalm or hymn had to be distinctly understood; melody and harmony were no longer allowed to interfere with the requisition, but had to be adapted to the meanest capacity of an unmusical congregation. As anthems, except in the Episcopal churches, found no place in the service of the other denominations, the American church-composer's field became restricted to the writing of psalm-tunes: he thus never learnt to handle larger forms. His musical imagination did not gain in breadth; his understanding of great, ample forms did not improve. He became satisfied, for many years to come, with the manufacturing of those little sacred glees; nay, he even became proud of such pigmy musical achievements. It took little time to compose them; little harmonic knowledge — tonic in its relation to dominant and sub-dominant — to harmonize them. To know how to modulate into the dominant, the sub-dominant, and perhaps some relative minor key, would go a great way. An amateur church-singer, with a good ear, could soon remember these trifling things, and sit down to writing new tunes. You find, in general, four short periods of four bars each: the ordinary stereotyped cadenza occupies two bars of this. There are numerous, frequently heard psalm-tune "motives" in the composer's memory: a little twist of one psalm-tune melody will give a new one. There are no battles with contrapuntal intri-

cacies, with new harmonic combinations, with new effective modulations. The congregation for whom the new tune is written will soon remember it, and sing it by heart: there is so much in it that resembles old acquaintances; every bar brings some familiar step in the melody. All this is easily understood, easily mastered, and will find a ready market.

The cultivation of absolute music, as played by instruments alone, had so far found little encouragement in New England. The Puritans prohibited instrumental music from public and private worship. It was thought to be condemned by the following biblical text: "I will not hear the melody of thy viols" (Amos, v. 23). And the pious Christian was reminded by instrumental music of Nebuchadnezzar's idolatrous concert of the cornet, flute, dulcimer, sackbut, psalters, and all kinds of music. Dissenters, in England as well as in New England, preached against instrumental music as being an impious amusement, and therefore not fit to be admitted into the church or the family. Thus, among others, an English dissenting minister, "the Reverend and Learned Mr. Pierce," published in 1786, in London, a "Tractate on Church musick," in which instrumental music is mercilessly condemned. This tractate, a vindication of the Dissenter's views with regard to instrumental music, is inscribed to "Mr. John Clark, the Ministers, and the several members of the first congregational dissenting Church in Boston, in America." The tractate is recommended by the Rev. Dr. Price and the Rev. Dr. Kippis; which recommendation gives the editor occasion to say that "he is the more desirous of subjoining the opinions of these gentlemen, because he knows the deserved esteem with which they are re-

garded in America." Mr. Pierce, the author of the tractate, admits that —

"Plain singing is capable both of raising and improving sentiments of rational piety and devotion, and is recommended in the New Testament. . . . But the addition of instrumental music should seem more calculated to divert and dissipate the pious affections of a reasonable service, than to fix them upon their proper objects. . . . It is not enough to say, that musical instruments are able to stir and cheer our minds; for it is not lawful for us to bring into use such things, of our own heads, into God's worship. Who knows not that wine has the like virtue, — to cheer men's minds and warm their affections? And yet it is unlawful to use it in the worship of God, except where it is recommended in the Lord's Supper. Vain, therefore, are these and such like allegations upon this head. And, unless it can be proved that our minds are carried toward spiritual and heavenly things, by some hidden virtue that nature has given to these musical instruments, as by a certain divine grace accompanying them, as God's own institutions, there is really nothing said to the purpose."

And, adds Dr. Kippis, —

"Since the use of instrumental music in Christian worship has no foundation in the New Testament, which is the standard of our faith and practice, it has to be prohibited."

The following quotation from Jerome, made by Dr. Pierce, in order to strengthen his position as antagonist of instrumental music and "decent singing," may prove how little music was then cared for by those dissenting ministers: —

"We must sing to God, not with the voice, but the heart. They are not artfully to supple their jaws and their throats, after the manner of the tragediens, that theatrical notes and songs should be heard in the church; but they are to praise God with fear, with good words, and knowledge of the Scriptures. If a man has an unpleasant voice, if he has good works, he is a sweet singer in God's ear."

It was fortunate for the American people that they did not heed such fanatical advice regarding the prohibition of musical culture. They soon discovered that "to praise God with good words" harmonized better when associated with good songs, and uttered by good voices. But in spite of such strong opposition to the cultivation of instrumental music it gradually began to find its way into the private homes of Americans, as well as into the church. In August, 1713, an organ was introduced into Boston, in New England. It was presented to the Queen's Chapel by Thomas Brattle, Esq.; but so great was the public prejudice then existing, that the organ remained seven months in the porch of the church before it was unpacked. At length, however, in 1714, it was put up, and was regularly used in that church (which after the reign of Queen Anne took the name of King's Chapel) until 1756, when it was sold to St. Paul's Church, Newburyport. It was used there eighty years; and in 1836 was sold, and put up at the St. John's Church, in Portsmouth, N.H. The original pipes and wind-chest remain in perfect order to this day.[1]

This prejudice against introducing organs into the church soon wore out; and many American congregations that could afford to pay for an organ imported from England such instruments, which have since proved a great help to hymn-singing.

The first attempt at organ-building in this country was made by a young Bostonian, Edward Bromfield, born in 1723; he entered Harvard College in 1738, and died in 1746. He was then considered well skilled in music, and, for recreation, built an organ with his own

[1] J. Moore's Dict. of Music.

hands; he, of course, copied his work from English organs he saw in Boston. He died, however, before he could finish his own. This organ was to have had two banks of keys and twelve hundred pipes.

Among other instruments which were brought over from Europe the principal ones were the harpsichord, and afterwards the pianoforte, the violin, the bass-viol (violoncello), the flute, the clarinet, the bassoon. At the beginning of this century very few churches in the important city of Boston could boast of an organ. The accompaniment, if the choir had one, consisted of a flute, a bassoon, and a bass-viol. Sometimes a clarinet took the place of the flute. "At that remote date very few musical instruments were to be found in private houses. In the entire population of Boston, of some six thousand families, not fifty pianofortes could be found."[1] The style of pieces for these instruments, besides sustaining the parts of the singing-school members, and, in some instances, the church-singer, were variations on ballads, or popular ballads, and different dance-tunes, a reproduction and imitation of English musical practice. Here are the titles of some of the pieces copied from a manuscript book of the end of the last century. They will convey an idea of the prevailing secular musical taste as cultivated in home-circles. "Ça Ira," "White Cockade," "Irish Howl," "French March," "Hessian Camp," "Duchess of Brunswick," "Duetto" by Mancinelli,[2] "Water Rice," "Nancy of the Mill," "O Bessy Bell," "German Spaw," "Ossian's Ghost," "Duke of York's March," "Duetto" by Dr. Arne, "Every Inch a Soldier," "Quick March

[1] J. S. Dwight's History of Music in Boston.

[2] An Italian flutist who was settled in London, where he died in 1802.

of the Twenty-sixth Regiment," "March," "Poor Soldier," "Sound Alarm," "When Nichola first to court began," "Sweet Village of the Valley," "Minuetto," "Dead March in Saul," "Bright Phœbus," "Ode to Harmony," "Swedish Air," "Quick March," "King of Sweden's March," "March des Marseillais," "Hessian Air," "Baron Steuben's March," "Prince Frederick's March," "Sonata from Minuetto in Samson," "March in Joseph," "Trio" by Humphrey.

The overwhelming number of marches proves that fighting was still in the air. The church-composers also ventured to write short introductory symphonies to their anthems. However, the prejudice against instrumental music, excited in the minds of the American people by the religious views of a large number of clergymen, was so deeply rooted that the American musician, who above all was a psalm-tune teacher, approached the composition of instrumental pieces with timidity. Music, in the eyes of the most liberal of these singing-teachers, was only to be cultivated in its relation with church-service. But, nevertheless, this musical cultivation, branching from psalmody, became more and more vivid among the people of New England. As we have already seen, the first, though still crude, attempts of the Billings school were hailed with delight by the newly organized church-choirs, singing-schools, and musical societies. Handel's "Messiah" found its way to these societies. Haydn's "Creation" followed. This was noble music, illustrating the most sacred themes of Christian faith. But the more intelligent patrons of music, who began to appreciate both the beauties, as well as the great technical difficulties to be overcome, in rendering such works tolerably well,

soon became aware of the fact that a more general and more thorough knowledge of the rudiments of music was urgently necessary, if any progress towards a more artistic performance of these master-works could be made. Musical societies, with a higher aim than the mere study of "fuging" psalm-tunes, were established. Billings's enthusiastic lines, —

> "We're met for a concert of modern invention:
> To tickle the ear is our present intention," —

found an echo all through New England. Thus the ear began to be recognized as the exceptional organ for the reception of musical impressions. Before this supreme court the "sacred noise made by an unpleasant voice" found no excuse or success. It was found that a roaring in this sensitive organ destroyed the sweetness of melody in the heart.

As the churches offered no opportunities for the study of such works as the "Messiah" and the "Creation" musical societies created such opportunities by giving occasional performances of the easier, and, as they appeared to them, more popular, parts of these works. Among those musical societies which at the early part of this century were formed throughout New England I consider the above-mentioned Handel Society of Dartmouth College — next to the Boston Handel and Haydn Society — the one that was in many respects most beneficial in its influence on the cultivation of a more serious style of music. Here we find men of learning cultivating the so long-despised and neglected art. President A. G. Brown, of Hamilton College, speaks as follows in a letter to me concerning the Dartmouth Handel Society: —

"The aims of the society were of the best. A good working-library of the best musical works then attainable was procured, including such works as the 'Messiah,' the 'Creation,' the Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Anthems, the Old Colony Collection, and other music of like kind. This was carefully studied by the society, and at the regular weekly meetings carefully sung. . . . Members of the society were chosen after due examination, and counted it an honor to be members of the association. Ladies were admitted as honorary members. And I have never heard better church-music than from that society at some period of its existence. Its influence did not stop within the walls of the college, but was widely diffused, and continued beyond college-life."

There is no doubt but that musical art, cultivated and patronized by the officers and students of an influential college, would readily draw into its ranks many of the American people who had been for so long a time taught to avoid its practice. Students who graduated from the college no doubt carried away with them the beautiful musical impressions they received while singing in the chorus of the Handel Society, or by listening to the performance of fine compositions. And we may feel sure, that, wherever they made their home, they helped to organize musical societies or more efficient church-choirs. Says President Brown, —

"A gentleman who was an earnest member of the society, 1838–42, subsequently became president of the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston; and to him as much as to any one, perhaps more than to any other one, is due the Music Hall in Boston, the great organ, the triennial festivals, the musical festivals of the children, and the thorough instruction in the schools."

This liberal treatment which music, as a fine art, received at the hands of the members of the Dartmouth College cannot be praised too highly, and especially

when we consider how mean an estimate was then placed on this exquisite art by many Americans. These Dartmouth professors, to whom the education of men was intrusted, were not so narrow in their views with regard to education as to exclude the cultivation of music from their halls; they were not so ignorant of the real refining influence of musical art (music has this in common with, if not to a higher degree than, all the other arts), when rightly cultivated, as some of those professors of our present time whom I have chanced to meet. The foolish plea that music is too emotional for the beneficial occupation of students — which I have heard invented by professors at their wits' end for some new accusation of this lovely muse — never entered the minds of those Dartmouth professors. But perhaps they reasoned that a little more æsthetic emotion instilled into the rough souls of male students would be instrumental in the creating of a more desirable refinement in feeling and manners among them; perhaps they had had occasion fully to comprehend the bearing of Shakspeare's lines about the man who has no music in his soul, and consequently endeavored to put some musical virtues in the souls of those who seemed to need it. After the hours of serious study were over, the members of the Handel Society found a healthy, pure, ennobling recreation in the cultivation of the best of choral works. Says President Brown, —

"I look back to my connection with the society during my college-days with great interest and gratitude. Much of my musical enjoyment in life, my knowledge and choice of the best things, I owe to it."

It is claimed, with much justice, that some of the best vocal and instrumental musicians have been sent

forth from the Dartmouth Handel Society to various parts of the country.[1] Of the enthusiasm for, and the devotion to, music exhibited by some of the Dartmouth professors, the following extract from a letter to me by Mr. J. Moore may serve as a proof: —

"When the New-Hampshire Musical Society was formed, its members, from all parts of the State, travelled a great distance to attend rehearsals; and the instruments, such as were then in use, were transported from place to place as wanted. The perseverance of some of the worthy members may be judged of from the fact that Dr. R. D. Mussey, then a medical professor at Dartmouth College, to accommodate and gratify the society and the public, conveyed the cumbrous double-bass of the Handel Society through the State from Hanover, on the upper branch of the Connecticut River, to Portsmouth, on the seashore; this then being the only instrument of the kind in the State, and Dr. Mussey the only man possessing the skill to perform on it."

The Handel Society of Dartmouth College ceased to exist a good many years ago.

Another society, the Stoughton Musical Society, dates back to an early epoch: it is, no doubt, the oldest existing musical society in the United States. According to information received by me, it is a direct outcome of W. Billings's personal labors. In the year 1774 Billings taught a singing-school in Stoughton, consisting of about forty-eight members. The Stoughton Musical Society was organized Nov. 7, 1786, after the close of the War for Independence. The members, at first all men, were residents of Stoughton, Canton, and Sharon. Women, though invited to take part in the singing of choruses, were at first not considered as members: it is only within a few years that the right of membership has been accorded to them. The first

[1] Dartmouth College is no longer so zealous in musical affairs, however.

material for chorus-practice, the society found in the Worcester Collection, and other similar compilations issued at that time. The members of the Stoughton Society never attempted oratorios in their entirety, but detached choruses of such works as came within their reach. The choruses were at first generally sung without instrumental accompaniment; later on, the inevitable bass-viol assisted, and then the violin, flute, clarinet. My informant, Mr. Winslow Battles, the present president of the society, tells me that —

"The early members were strong-voiced singers, many of them with high tenor voices. They studied and sung music as they and their contemporaries read and studied books; there being but few of them, therefore were learned by heart. My memory runs back and embraces some of the members (we were young men in the early part of this century), and I remember them as vigorous singers and excellent readers, of course without the *technique* of modern singers. There were no professionals from the cultured fields of Europe to instruct and guide, nor were there treatises or essays upon the science or art of music until way after 1800, and even then these publications were of American origin.[1] So that the music for practice and use in the church and the fireside was composed by those who had no adequate knowledge of harmony and counterpoint. Hence, these compositions, while containing pleasing, and oftentime rich, melodies, were deficient in harmony."

Squire Elijah Dunbar of Canton was the first president and leader of the Stoughton Musical Society. The annual meeting of the members takes place on Christmas. The morning is devoted to business, and in the evening a concert takes place; and, according to ancient custom at such annual meeting, "a hot turkey supper, and nothing stronger than tea or coffee," is

[1] See chapter IV.

partaken of. The society, which now counts five hundred members, recruited from Stoughton, Sharon, Canton, Randolph, Braintree, Brockton, and Weymouth, seems to have remained faithful in a certain degree to its first musical aims; viz., the production of the compositions of the Billings school. In 1828 the society published a collection of church-music, a compilation much resembling all other similar issues of that time. The "Marseillaise" is given as an anthem! In 1878 appeared the "Stoughton Musical Society's Collection of Sacred Music," containing selections from the earliest American composers, as originally written, together with a few selections from European and modern composers. As a mere historical monument to the first American composers this enterprise of the mem bers of the Stoughton Musical Society deserves commendation; and they say with justice that "there seems to rest a responsibility, peculiar and imperative, to put forth an effort to rescue from oblivion that has already overtaken a portion, and threatens soon to ingulf the whole, of the works of these pioneers in musical composition and culture in our country." But when they speak of the "recognition of the intrinsic merit of their compositions" they shoot far beyond the mark. The tunes and anthems, as I have shown in another place, have, aside from some meagre melodic charm, no artistic merit, and are now rightfully rejected. The "Stoughton Centennial Collection of Sacred Music" is merely a compilation made to satisfy a historical curiosity. With this end in view it was well that the pieces were reproduced in exact conformity, in music and words, with the original publication, by the authors themselves.

The Stoughton Musical Society, in the close vicinity of Boston, seems to have had little influence on the growth of musical culture. It cultivates a chosen field of its own; and may it rest faithful to that, in many ways, interesting field, and also continue to indulge in feasts of "hot turkey and tea and coffee," without longing for any thing of wilder and stronger flavor!

THIRD PERIOD, 1815–1825.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BOSTON HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY.

CHAPTER VI.

MUSICAL SOCIETIES AND THE ORATORIO IN BOSTON.

In Europe musical culture outside of the Church was at first almost exclusively in the hands of the higher classes. It is true the performers, both vocal and instrumental, generally belonged to the lower classes, — the people; but it was in the halls of princes and nobles that those musicians found the necessary opportunity and encouragement for the practice of their art, and the exhibition of their skill. It was for the aristocratic patron that the composer endeavored to create new and ingenious works. From those high places musical culture gradually reached the people, and became in course of time the property of all. Thus musical art-development proceeded downward.

In democratic America, where all enjoy the same political and educational advantages, where social divisions are traced by very slender lines indeed, — the only class-difference that some individuals attempt to mark

being, in most cases, the possession of a longer and fuller purse than that of others, but not the possession of greater personal refinement and superior talent, — musical culture, as far as it has any existence here, proceeded from the people, and belongs to the people. The people first became interested in the cultivation of music; and the ranks of chorus-singers, whether in the church-choir or in the oratorio society, have been, and are still, recruited from all classes of the people. The man of letters, the merchant, the artisan, the farmer, thinks it his duty to buy, as soon as his means allow, a piano for his daughter, and to provide her with the necessary musical instruction. The first impulse, however, given to musical culture in the United States, started from the singing-societies formed throughout New England; and, among all these, that established in the rich capital of New England, Boston, was above all others instrumental in the promotion of a more broad and thorough musical education. I mean the *Boston Handel and Haydn Society.*

Singing-schools and musical societies existed in Boston several years before the establishment of the Handel and Haydn Society.

I copy here, from Mr. Henry M. Brooks' valuable compilation, "Olden Time Music," a number of interesting musical items, announcements of concerts, and concert programmes, relating to Boston musical affairs, anterior to the establishment of the Handel and Haydn Society. These extracts will show the gradual steps of the New England musician and musical amateur towards the advent of a more prosperous musical culture.

In 1744 there was a concert at Faneuil Hall in

Boston, for the benefit of the poor; and Mr. Dipper, who was organist at King's Chapel, announces a "Publick Concert" for the 3d of February, 1761:—

"When will be performed several pieces of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, composed by the best Masters; and many of them accompanied by two French Horns. To be divided into three acts. To begin at 6 o'clock. Tickets a Half a Dollar each."

From the Boston "Chronicle," Nov. 1, 1768:—

This is to acquaint the Gentlemen and Ladies that a
Concert of Music
will be performed
On Monday, the 21st Instant, at Six O'clock in the Evening, at the Music-Hall in Brattle-Street, opposite Dr. Cooper's Meeting-House. After the Concert is over, the Gentlemen and Ladies may have a Ball till Eleven o'clock.

On the 10th of January, 1786, a "Concert of Sacred Music" was given at the Chapel Church. The affair was quite an interesting one. As the concert, given under the auspices of the *Musical Society* for the benefit of the "poor prisoners confined in the jail in this town," was in connection with the "Morning Service of the Church," I shall only name the pieces performed. These are:—

Overture in the sacred Oratorio called the Occasional Oratorio, composed by the late celebrated Mr. Handel, performed by all the musical instrumental band.

The first famous and justly celebrated Recitativo, in the Oratorio of the Messiah, composed by the inspired Handel, sung, accompanied by the first and second violin, the tenor and bass instruments, the words "Comfort ye my people." Then the first song, "Every valley," accompanied by the proper instruments. Then "Glory to God" and the Doxology, as set to music by Mr. Selby.

The 4th Concerto of *Amizon*, *Musica de Capella opa 7 mo* (!), be performed by the Organ and all the instruments.

Immediately after the Creed the Song from the Oratorio of the Messiah, "The Trumpet shall sound," is to be sung, accompanied by the "Trumpet."

A song from the Oratorio of Sampson, "Let the bright Cherubims."

Then the second Organ Concert of Mr. Handel is to be performed.

Lastly, the musical Band will perform a favourite Overture by Mr. Bach (the London Bach, son of S. Bach).

Handel is already well represented in the above performance.

On the 27th of October, 1789, a concert was given in honor of President Washington's visit to Boston. Here is the programme of that fête: —

For Publick Ornament.

An Oratorio

Or Concert of Sacred Musick,

Will be performed at Stone Chapel in Boston, in presence of the President of the United States.

FIRST PART.

1. A congratulary Ode to the President.
2. A favourite Air in the "Messiah" (composed by the celebrated Handel), "Comfort ye my People." By Mr. Rea.
3. Organ Concerto — by Mr. Selby.
4. The favourite Air in the Oratorio of Samson (composed by the celebrated Mr. Handel). By Mr. Rea.
5. Anthem from 100th Psalm, composed by Mr. Selby.

PART THE SECOND.

The Oratorio of *Jonah*

complete. The Solos by Messrs. Rea, Fay, Brewer, and Dr. Rogerson. The Choruses by the Independent Musical Society: The instrumental parts by a Society of Gentlemen, with the Band of his Most Christian Majesty's Fleet.

☞ As the above Oratorio has been highly applauded by the best judges, and has never been performed in America; and as the first Performers of this country will be joined by the excellent band of

his Most Christian Majesty's squadron, the Publick will have every reason to expect a more finished and delightful Performance than ever was exhibited in the United States.

Here is an interesting programme, given May 15, 1798, at Salem, by Gottlieb Graupner (see page 120): —

PART 1ST.

Grand Symphony . . . . . *Pleyel.*
Song: "On by the spur of valour goaded." Mr. Collins . *Shield.*
Clarinet Quartette . . . . . *Vogel.*
Messrs. Granger, Laumont, von Hagen, and Graupner.
Song: "He pipes so sweet." Mrs. Graupner . . . *Hook.*
Concerto on the French Horn. Mr. Rosier . . . *Ponton.*
A favourite new Song: "Little Sally's wooden ware." . *Arnold.*
Miss Solomon.
Full Piece (probably part of Symphony) . . *Hayden* (sic).

PART 2D.

Quartetto: "Who shall deserve the glowing Praise?" . *Linly.*
Mrs. Graupner, Mr. Granger, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Mallet.
Concerto on the Clarinet, composed and performed by Mr. Schaffer.
A new favourite echo Song: "How do you do?" . . *Hook.*
Mrs. Graupner, and accompanied on the Hautboy by Mr. Graupner.
Concerto on the Violin. Laumont . . . . . *Foder.*[1]
A comic Irish Song: "Boston news." Mr. Collins.
Concerto on the Hautboy, the composition of the celebrated Fisher.
Mr. Graupner.
Duet: "They Dance to the Fiddle and Tabor," from the much admired Opera of the "Lock and Key."
Mrs. Graupner and Mr. Collins.[2]
Finale (probably part of a symphony) . . . . *Pleyel.*

The next concert, given by M. Mallet, is also highly interesting. It introduced the Italian musician Fil Trajetto, who had then recently arrived in Boston. The concert having taken place at the *Conservatory* proves

[1] No doubt Fodor, the distinguished French violinist and instrumental composer.
[2] By Shield.

that efforts were made at that early time to introduce such musical institutions in America. M. Mallet, a French gentleman, came over with Lafayette, served in the army of the Revolution to the end of the war, and then settled in Boston as teacher of music, and later on opened a music store. Here is the programme of the concert which took place May 19, 1801 : —

PART I.

1. Overture of Chimène . . . . . *Sacchini.*
2. Air, sung by Fil Trajetto, accompanied on the Oboe, Clarinet, Tenor, and Bass . . . . . *Fil Trajetto.*
   Messrs. Graupner, Granger, Schaffer, and Mallet.
3. Concerto, Clarinet. Mr. Granger (by desire), *Schaffer of Boston.*
4. Song, "My plaint in no one pity moves" . . *Storace.*
   Mrs. Graupner, accompanied on the Clarinet by Mr. Granger.
5. Concerto, Violin. Fil Trajetto . . . . *Fil Trajetto.*
6. Glee, "Come all noble souls" . . . . *Fil Trajetto.*
   Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Graupner, and Mr. Mallet.

PART II.

1. Overture on the Pianoforte . . . . . *Hayden.*
   Mr. Mallet, accompanied by Messrs. Graupner and Trajetto.
2. The favourite Song of "The Wolf." Mr. Mallet . *Shield.*
3. Concerto, Bass. Mr. Mallet . . . . . *Bervol.*
4. Song, "The Soldier Tir'd." Mrs. Jones . . *Dr. Arne.*
5. Concerto, Oboe. Mr. Graupner . . . . *Le Brun.*
6. Song, "Come, sweet sleep," with accompaniment on the Sistre, by Mr. Mallet . . . . . *Gluck.*
7. Duett, "Bid me, when forty winters" . . . *S. Webbe.*
   Messrs. Story and Mallet.

The word "oratorio" is, as we all know, the characteristic name of the sacred musical drama. In the United States, until towards the end of the first half of this century, the meaning of the word "oratorio" was rather an ambiguous one: any concert made up of sacred pieces by different composers was called an oratorio.

At such a performance it often happened that very secular pieces found a place on the programme.

In New York, as early as 1751, during a performance of the Beggar's Opera, "with entertainments between the acts; viz., a Harlequin Dance, a Pierot Dance, and the Drunken Peasant, all by gentlemen lately from London," Mr. Kean, for whose benefit the performance was given, sung *an oratorio*, a short sacred piece. This was, no doubt, the first time that the word "oratorio" appeared in a public entertainment in America; and probably the custom of calling any detached sacred piece "oratorio" may be dated from that time.

If we study the establishment of musical societies in American cities, we shall find, that, with the exception of the above-mentioned Stoughton Musical Society, the Boston Handel and Haydn Society, and the New-York Philharmonic Society, very few among them have had a long existence. At the beginning of the organization of a society the prevalence of much enthusiasm may be noticed among the members and friends of the new venture. Concerts are given, a climax is soon reached, the public seems to be delighted for a short time. The members, for some cause or other, become gradually indifferent; the chorus-ranks thin out; the society is dissolved; the property, generally consisting of a piano and music-books, is sold, or transferred to a new society just forming out of the *débris* of the lately defunct one.

The Massachusetts Musical Society, founded in 1807 at Boston, seems to have been the predecessor of the Handel and Haydn Society. In spring, 1807, fifteen persons met together "for the purpose of forming themselves into a society for improving the mode of

performing sacred music;" that being then the principal aim of all New-England singing-societies. The Massachusetts Musical Society was then organized by the adoption of a constitution and by-laws, and by choosing a government, consisting of a president, a vice-president, secretary, treasurer, librarian, and selecting committee; and a sum was subscribed towards the purchase of six volumes of sacred music as the foundation for a musical library. The selecting committee then proposed the following tunes to be performed at the next meeting: viz., St. Ann's, Old Hundred, Blendon, Easter, and the Ninety-seventh Psalm, together with an anthem taken from the "Worcester Collection of Psalmody." At another meeting Handel's anthem, "O Praise the Lord with one consent," and Pleyel's Hymn were sung.

This society seems to have held monthly meetings, bringing the roll of its membership to about twenty persons. The meetings of the society were held, with more or less regularity, until March, 1810. On the 21st of that month eleven persons present at an appointed meeting "Voted, that, on the next evening, the library be sold to the highest bidder for the purpose of paying the debts of the society." The society was dissolved on the 6th of July, 1810.

Until the beginning of this century American musical culture, as far as it went, received its musical nourishment almost exclusively through English sources. Once in a while we meet the name of a German, French, or Italian musician, who ventured across the Atlantic Ocean to settle in the New World. Such a one was Hans Gram, whom we have already met as co-editor of "The Massachusetts Compiler." The de-

cided German tendency of the rules of that publication, as I have shown, must surely be attributed to him. Hans Gram also published anthems and tunes as set to music by himself; among them "Sacred Lines for Thanksgiving Day," published in 1793. Gram was at that time organist at the Brattle Church, Boston. His American contemporaries seemed to have thought much of his musical *savoir-faire.* The above collection has the following recommendation, signed by J. Kimball, N. Fay, J. Lane:—

"We, the subscribers, have perused a manuscript copy of an anthem and several psalm-tunes, composed by Mr. Hans Gram of Boston, and do readily and cheerfully give it as our opinion, that the aforesaid anthem and tunes are so well composed, both as to melody and harmony, as to render them deserving of a favorable reception from every lover of sacred music."

Gram, however, was not a strong harmonist, though better than Billings and others of that time. Billings possessed more originality than Gram, whose tunes are written in the spirit and form of the German *choral;* and one, "Devotion," is quite an acceptable piece. Hans Gram makes a correct and effective use of the different inversions of the dominant seventh, for which one looks in vain in the psalm-tunes of his American colleagues. At the beginning of this century the Italian singing-teacher *Philip Trajetta,* of whom I shall speak in another place, seems to have spent some time in Boston.

But, according to Mr. J. S. Dwight,[1] the foreign musician who first exercised a decided influence in musical matters in Boston was the German *Gottlieb Graupner.*

"He was oboist in the band of a Hanoverian regiment. After

[1] History of Music in Boston.

his honorable discharge (April 8, 1788) from the band he went to London, and played in Haydn's orchestra, when that great master brought out his twelve famous symphonies in Solomon's concerts, 1791–92. From London he came to Prince Edward's Island: then spent some time in Charleston, S.C., where he married, and came to Boston in 1798. With a few associates he formed the nucleus of the first meagre combination which could be called in any sense an orchestra. We remember in our boyhood seeing him lead the little orchestra in the old Federal-street Theatre with his double-bass. He was a famous timist. Of professional musicians there was not half a score in town; but Mr. Graupner and his little knot of musical friends, mostly amateurs, formed a 'Philharmonic Society' in 1810, which was still in existence when the Handel and Haydn Society was formed. It was simply a social meeting, held on Saturday evenings, when, in their small way, they practised Haydn's symphonies, etc."

A concert of the Philharmonic Society that took place in March, 1821, led the "Euterpeiad"—the first established musical journal in Boston—to make the following remarks:—

"The last concert of this useful nursery of music was unusually attractive. . . . There is a great difference between vulgar and refined playing, between playing mechanically right or with taste and feeling, and between excelling only in trifles of fashionable playing or being an able and judicious performer in general. . . . When a great performer introduces something new, it becomes fashionable, though it consists only in trifles; but the true art of playing will always remain independent of such things, in a similar manner as the rules of harmony will never be deceived by the laws of fashionable modulation." (?)

A Mr. Warren, who played in the violin quartet, was praised for his "chaste and truly delightful first attempt. The public concerts of this society are increasing in interest and attraction." According to Mr. Dwight the last concert of the Philharmonic Society took place Nov. 24, 1824. The band consisted of about

sixteen pieces, — violins, a viola, cello (bass-viol), double-bass, a flute, a clarinet, a bassoon, a French horn, a trumpet, and timpani. Graupner kept a small music-store, engraved and published music for the use of his pupils. He also compiled and published a pianoforte method, — "Rudiments of the Art of Playing on the Pianoforte." The following class of pieces are to be found in Graupner's method. They testify to the teacher's soundness of musical taste and artistic judgment. There are pieces by Handel, Scarlatti (Dominico), Pleyel, Haydn, Corelli, Linley, Naumann, Graupner, Cherubini, and Sebastian Bach. All honor to the honest musician Graupner! he pioneered nobly.

The whole family of Graupner must have been very musically accomplished. On the death of Mrs. Catherine Graupner, — whom, first as Mrs. Heelyer, I shall speak of as singing in English opera in New York and some Southern cities, — the "Euterpeiad"[1] said that "for many years she was the only female vocalist in this metropolis [Boston."]

Among the English musicians who, at the end of last, and beginning of this, century, occupied a distinguished position in the United States, were *Rayner Taylor* and *Dr. G. F. Jackson.* The first received his musical education as one of the boys of the Chapel Royal. He was an able organist, vocalist, harpsichord player, and composer. In 1792 he came to America, visited Boston, passed some time in the Southern States, and finally settled in Philadelphia. He was considered a great authority on musical matters by his American colleagues. He contributed a number of well-written chants to Rev. William Smith's collection "The

[1] For July 9, 1821.

Churchman's Choral Companion for the Protestant-Episcopal Church in the United States. New York, 1808."

Dr. G. F. Jackson was a schoolmate of R. Taylor and Dr. Arnold. He came to America in 1796. He at first lived in Norfolk, Va.; then at Alexandria, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. In 1812 he removed to Boston, and became organist of the Brattle-street Church. During the war between the United States and England he was exiled to Northampton. In 1815 he returned to Boston, and was successively organist at King's Chapel, Trinity Church, and St. Paul's Church. The Bostonians looked upon him as a great musician, and he was engaged as music-teacher in the first families of Boston. He is said to have first taught the Bostonian church-choirs the English manner of chanting. He published a book of chants, canons, anthems, etc. He also contributed some chants to the above-mentioned collection.

Through these musicians', and especially Graupner's labors, the rising amateurs of Boston became acquainted with the Italian and Anglo-German musical tendencies then prevalent in the English capital; for at the end of the last century the German musician who settled in London had to sacrifice a good deal of his German musical taste. Even in Germany it was not at this epoch eminently German in the sense we understand it to-day: it was greatly permeated with Italian-art influences. In London the professional musician, in order to become successful, had to pass the three following distinct musical strata: the *Italian*, as represented by the opera; the *German*, by instrumental music; and the *English*, by church-music, especially the

cathedral-service, and the ballad. This great mixture of national musical tastes sent its representatives to the New World, in order to help to lay the foundation of a new art-development. In the eyes of the American musical amateur, as well as of the professional musician, all that was sung and played, aside from the psalm-tune productions of the Billings school, was simply considered as *European*, without much recognition of any national characteristic traits. The struggle for musical supremacy on the American continent between the different representatives of English, Italian, and German music, did not begin to take a hostile character until after the establishment of the New-York Philharmonic Society.[1] After that time, as we shall see, the above three groups of musicians, with their adherents, separated into three camps. The English musician, from old, inherited habit, generally sided with the Italian singing-teacher and opera-singer, against the growing influence of the aggressive German piano-teacher and band-player. Though some fine French musicians also settled in this country, especially in New York and New Orleans, they remained, on the whole, neutral, accepting and advocating the good, as far as they understood it, regardless of nationality. Later on we shall find a new group, — the "native musicians," — who considered it their duty to "fight all the rest of those foreigners."

As we have seen above, the first musical cultivation in America was promoted by English musicians, and was the result of such English musical practice as chanced to become known to the American colonist. The Americans themselves were then, aside from their

[1] See Chapter XIV.

political independence, more English than any thing else, and received all their impulses in political, industrial, as well as intellectual life, from the mother-country. Thus musical taste, as far as it took a foothold in the Colonies, and afterwards in the Republic, was English; and this English was *strongly* Italian. Here is an estimate of the characteristics of the German and Italian styles of music, as apparently accepted by an English writer, and copied by an American compiler,[1] John R. Parker: —

"The taste in music, both of the Germans and the Italians, is suited to the different characters of the two nations. That of the first is rough and martial; and their music consists of strong effects, produced without much delicacy, by the rattle of a number of instruments [not very complimentary]. The Italians, from their strong and lively feelings, have endeavored in their music to express all the agitations of the soul, from the most delicate sensations of love to the most violent effects of hatred and despair."

Our musical writer has, however, in another place, pronounced Handel, Haydn, and Mozart "the brightest luminaries of the musical world; and while harmony shall be cherished as a science, and be loved as an amusement, they will always stand conspicuous among those who have delighted mankind." From this we may conclude the writer considered the above masters deficient in melody. He censures Haydn for having composed the "Creation" to German words, "which are not capable of Italian melody. How could he, even if he had wished it, have written melodies like those of Sacchini? Born in Germany, knowing his own feelings and those of his countrymen, he apparently wished to please them in the first place. We

[1] The Life of Haydn by Bombet, with notes by W. Gardiner.

may criticise a man when we see him mistake the road to his object; but is it reasonable to quarrel with him on the choice of his object?" These remarks are, indeed, very *naïve;* and the following passage adds the climax:—

"A great Italian master has produced the only criticism worthy of Haydn and of himself. He has recast, from one end to the other, all the music of the 'Creation,' which will not see the light till after his death. This master thinks that Haydn, in symphony, is a man of genius, but in every thing else only estimable. For my own part I am of the opinion, that, when the other 'Creation' shall have been published, the German one will always be preferred at Vienna, and the Italian one at Naples."

All this is pretty hard on Haydn: it however shows the tendency of taste of the Anglo-Italian musician and musical amateur. The American compiler simply took his material from English sources that fell in his hands: he had not yet got far enough to have a decided opinion of his own regarding the higher, æsthetic forms of music.

After the dissolution of the Massachusetts Musical Society no regular organized society seems to have existed in Boston until the year when the *Handel and Haydn Society* was established. Oratorios in the American manner, as described above, were however given under the leadership of Dr. Jackson. Here is the advertisement of such a one:—

"A grand selection from Handel's sacred oratorios will be performed at the Stone Chapel on Thursday evening, Oct. 12, 1812, under the direction of Dr. G. J. Jackson, assisted by the theatrical band [probably Graupner's band], and many respectable vocal and instrumental amateurs of this town."

Among the prominent attractions of the concert were

the celebrated bell chorus, "Welcome, Mighty King!" accompanied by Dr. Jackson on the carillons, and the Hallelujah Chorus, from the "Messiah," with the accompaniment of trumpet and kettledrums. Doors opened at half-past four. It commenced at half-past five.[1]

In 1813 Dr. Jackson, with Messrs. Graupner and Mallet, gave a series of oratorios, some of which were given at Salem. During the second war between the American Republic and England musical performances were mostly confined to the blare of trumpets and the shrill sounds of the fife.[1] When peace was restored, the news created universal joy among the American people; and the Bostonians celebrated the event by a service of thanksgiving and praise, which took place at the old Stone Chapel. The duet from Handel's "Judas Maccabæus," "Lovely Peace," was sung by Mrs. Graupner and Col. Webb; and a part of the Dettingen Te Deum, and the Hallelujah Chorus, were executed by nearly two hundred voices and fifty instrumental performers. This musical performance seems to have made a deep impression on the listeners; and after that, becoming aware of the musical resources of their city, the most zealous amateurs were, no doubt, moved to gather together as many among them as possible, in order to organize a new and efficient musical society.

On March 24, 1815, Messrs. G. Graupner, Thomas S. Webb, and A. Peabody, issued the following notice: —

"SIR, — You are requested to attend a meeting of the principal performers of sacred music from the several choirs in town on Thursday evening, 30th instant, at seven o'clock, at Mr. Graupner's hall, for the purpose of considering the expediency and practicability of forming a society, to consist of a selection from the sev-

[1] See Winthrop's Address.

eral choirs, for cultivating and improving a correct taste in the performance of sacred music, and also to introduce into more general practice the works of Handel, Haydn, and other eminent composers."

At the appointed meeting all the different points were discussed, and all those present expressed a desire to establish such a society. A committee of five was chosen to draft the necessary regulations. On Thursday morning, April 20, 1815, the society was organized, a constitution was adopted, and signed by thirty-one gentlemen. The following composed the first board of government: Thomas S. Webb, *President;* Amasa Winchester, *Vice-President;* Nathaniel Tucker, *Treasurer;* Matthew S. Parker, *Secretary;* Elnathan Duren, Benjamin Holt, Joseph Bailey, Charles Nolen, Ebenezer Withington, John Dodd, Jacob Guild, W. K. Philipps, and Jon. Huntington, *Trustees.*

The first expenses were defrayed by voluntary loans from members. The meetings of the society were first held at the hall in Pond Street; and the pieces performed were selections from the "Lock Hospital Collection" and "The Massachusetts Compiler," and the first performances (rather rehearsals) were flattering to the hopes of the members and the friends of the new institution. The society continued to enlarge, and held their adjourned meetings from time to time until the evening of Christmas Day, Dec. 25, 1815, when they publicly performed their first oratorio (at the King's Chapel, Tremont Street), which consisted of the first part of Hadyn's "Creation," and airs and choruses selected from Handel's works. The chorus numbered about one hundred, ten of whom were ladies. The accompaniment was furnished by an orchestra of a

dozen pieces and an organ. The number of persons present was nine hundred and forty-five; and the net proceeds from the sale of tickets, five hundred and thirty-three dollars. The performance gave general satisfaction; and the society repeated the same on the evening of the 18th January, 1816, to nearly as numerous an audience. A critic of the day said that "such was the excitement of the hearers, and attention of the performers, that there is nothing to compare with it at the present day;" and the society was pronounced as "being now the wonder of the nation." Thus the Handel and Haydn Society at once took a strong hold upon the Bostonians' admiration and sympathy.

The society obtained an Act of corporation Feb. 9, 1816.

I will give a few extracts from that interesting document. The first section of the Act reads, —

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in general court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That Thomas Smith Webb, Amasa Winchester, Nathaniel Tucker, and Matthew Stanley Parker, together with such as may become associated with them and their successors, be, and they hereby are, incorporated and made a body politic and corporation for the purpose of extending knowledge and improving the style of performance of church-music, by the name of the Handel and Haydn Society; and by that name they may sue and be sued, have a common seal, and the same at pleasure alter, and be entitled to all the powers and privileges incident to aggregate corporations."

Art. III. of the constitution says, regarding the duties of the president, "He shall preside at all the meetings of the society and of the board of trustees. He shall assign the parts to the performers, and direct the time and style of the performances," etc. The president thus acted as leader of the society.

Art. V. assigns the trustees, among other duties, the power to judge of the qualifications of candidates, to select pieces of music for performance." I will give entire Art. VIII. as containing some interesting points.

"In order that the portion of the public who are lovers of sacred music may have opportunities of participating in the enjoyment contemplated by the members of this society, there shall be performed occasional oratorios, or exhibition of sacred music, whenever the government of the society shall think proper; to which persons may be admitted by tickets to be sold for that purpose. And the moneys arising from the sale of said tickets shall be appropriated to the payment of the expenses of the society, the remuneration of professional musicians, the procurement of a musical library, musical instruments, and all such other accommodations as may be deemed necessary and proper for the society by the board of trustees; but no one, who is a member of the society, shall be entitled to claim any compensation for personal services rendered to the society in the performance of music, either on private or public occasions."

The first assessment of five dollars was laid on each member July 12, 1816. The society continued to increase in such a manner, that it was found necessary to procure a more extensive place for rehearsals; and on Feb. 11, 1817, they held their first meeting in Boylston Hall, where they remained until 1839, when they removed to the Melodeon Hall. On July 5, 1817, the President of the United States honored the society with his presence. Several oratorios (concerts of sacred music) were given during the year. Mr. S. P. Taylor of New York presided at the organ.

The concerts of 1818 were extremely interesting. On Christmas of that year the society performed the "Messiah" entire, and was assisted by T. Philips and Incledon, two able English singers.[1] Thus the Handel

[1] See their biographies, p. 150.

and Haydn Society, after skirmishing for several years round the great work, finally summoned up courage, and boldly passed the Rubicon; and from that time on they conquered a distinguished name for themselves in the annals of American musical culture. According to the Boston musical journal "Euterpeiad" this was not the first oratorio produced *entire*, in Boston: Haydn's "Creation," it says, "was performed entire at the King's Chapel in 1816." The editor, however, does not state by what society this performance was given.

These two great masters, Handel and Haydn, from the earliest time that they became known to the American chorus-singer, have formed the strong pivot round which, for many years, all musical culture in the field of oratorio rotated. The "Messiah" and the "Creation," the two greatest productions in this form by these masters, were at first sung in all possible ways, but the right one, to all kinds of instrumental accompaniments. Chorus-singers often laid them aside for the sake of "fashionable" novelties; but after a little while they returned to them to gather from these ever-fresh sources of true musical inspiration new strength and further knowledge and ennobling art impressions. Thus the choruses of Handel and Haydn — some all grandeur, majesty, depth, and noble sentiment; some all cheerfulness, grace, *naïve* charm, and inspiring power — contained a variety of musical expressions and æsthetic forms amply sufficient for the young American musical aspirants to grow strong on, and to lay a solid foundation for future development. It was a fortunate thought of the gentlemen who organized the Handel and Haydn Society to write those two great

names on their banner; and the subsequent history of musical culture in America, especially in New England, has proved that it was a fortunate circumstance in the interest of true musical art that the immortal authors of the "Messiah" and the "Creation" were held up as the ideal oratorio-composers, to whom generation after generation could look with confidence and true veneration; and surely a musical culture nourished by such healthy, strengthening food, cannot fail to bear still richer and more abundant fruit in future.

The establishment of the Handel and Haydn Society must be considered an event of the greatest and most lasting importance with regard to musical development in this country. The high character and intelligence of the members, who from the very start became deeply interested in the new society, imparted to it high principles and a serious aim, and in a short time succeeded in raising it to such an influential position that it became the standard and authority in musical matters, upon which all other musical societies in the country began to look with respect and healthy emulation.

The members of the Handel and Haydn Society were not alone satisfied with the singing of choral works for their own and their friends' edification and entertainment. They were desirous of seeing a more liberal musical education promoted among the people. They believed in music's highly refining influence; nay, they attributed to it a certain moral power over the feelings of men, and thought it their duty to help to increase that power. They were not afraid that music would exercise a so foolishly dreaded supposed weakening influence on the heart of man. Good choral works were then scarce in New England, and few persons had

sufficient knowledge and taste necessary for the choice of suitable pieces needed by the newly established societies.

Many of the members of the Handel and Haydn Society were professional musicians. They were willing to serve as guides to other singers. It was under the auspices of the board of managers of the Handel and Haydn Society that musical works of a better style, taken from the best attainable English publications, were issued in Boston. Such were, among others, the "Bridgewater Collection," the Handel and Haydn Collection of Church-Music edited by Lowell Mason, the Handel and Haydn Collection of Anthems, three volumes, etc. All these works were readily accepted by the rural societies of New England, and for a long time formed their principal stock of music. These musical publications, besides satisfying a real want felt, proved at the same time a good investment for the society. Since 1820 these sources have in great part paid the expenses of the society. The profits which have arisen to the Handel and Haydn Society and its compilers from psalmody alone are said to have exceeded twenty thousand dollars; and it is presumed that the publishers have been enriched at least as much more. Music-publishers generally get the lion's share!

Thus a wise management placed the Handel and Haydn Society on a sure footing. It continued to grow, and in 1825 was considered by a "professional gentleman" to be superior to any similar institution this side of the Atlantic.

CHAPTER VII.

MUSICAL SOCIETIES IN NEW YORK AND SOME OTHER CITIES.

We have seen that musical culture in the United States, owing its first impulse to church-music in the form of English psalmody, began its first important development throughout New England under the lead of Boston. Although we find recorded, that, in some of the Southern cities, — Albany, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Richmond, Charleston, New Orleans, — musical entertainments, consisting of anthems, oratorio-choruses, psalm-tunes, and even light operas, were given by local musical societies, these attempts were, on the whole, only of local importance, exercising little influence outside the city limits. Among all these cities, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New Orleans exhibited the most musical life. But *the city* that finally became, in musical as well as in commercial matters, the metropolis of America, and which eventually, in a great measure, superseded the New-England capital as dictator of musical taste to the entire United States, was *New York*.

Regarding early musical affairs in the Protestant churches of New York we find the situation similar to that of the New-England churches during the colonial period. Some admitted psalmody; others rejected

it. In Old Trinity Church the Episcopal service, as performed in England, was kept up with the best means possible. It seems even probable that Trinity Church possessed the first organ in America. In the early part of the eighteenth century an organ is mentioned in connection with that church. Another important fact is, that, on the 9th of January, 1770, Handel's "Messiah" was performed in Trinity Church, repeated on the 3d of October the following year, and again in April, 1772.

Musical societies were established in New York about the middle of the last century, and the Apollo Society seems to have been the foremost among them. Others followed, and again disappeared. In 1791 a St. Cecilia Society was established, but it lasted only a few years; the cultivation of instrumental music was its aim. Mr. S. Johnson tells me that, about 1838, a gentleman, Mr. Ming, who belonged to it, told him that the St. Cecilia Society failed because the public did not appreciate classical music. When a small band of seven or eight musicians one night attempted to play in the theatre a portion of a Haydn symphony, the "gods" in the gallery cried out, "Stop that noise; give us 'Bonypart crossing the Rhine,' 'Washington's March,' or 'Yankee Doodle.'" On the following night, when the musicians repeated the "offense" by again attempting to play Haydn, they were greeted with "cat calls," rotten eggs, and bouquets of a variety of vegetables.

At the beginning of the third decade of this century the principal New York musical societies were the *New York Choral Society*, the *Philharmonic Society*, the *Euterpean Society*, and a *Handel and Haydn Society* which had a brilliant but short existence.

The Choral Society, pronounced by a contemporary

critic as "the first in the city for talent and good effect in classical sacred music," owed its existence to a few enterprising individuals, who saw that a society of that description was very much needed, and would prove eminently useful. They met for the first time in the Episcopal Charity Schoolroom about the middle of September, 1823. After a few meetings they resolved upon forming themselves into a society. A formidable array of officers was elected. Besides the president there were three vice-presidents. All these presiding officers were clergymen. James H. Swindalls was conductor. The board of officers of the early American musical societies was often the main feature of a society's musical labors; and it was imperiously necessary to interest the clergymen in the destinies of newly organized aspirants for musical fame. This arrangement sometimes proved useful to the success of the musical society thus patronized.

The constitution of the New-York Choral Society stipulated that "each performing male member pay into the treasury one dollar per quarter. Non-performing members (subscribers) pay annually ten dollars." The society met once a week in the lecture-room of St. George's Church. One of the main objects of the society was to "hold itself in readiness to assist with its talents any charitable intention in the city."

On April 20, 1824, the New-York Choral Society gave its first *grand* performance at St. George's Church, Beekman Street. The programme of the performance was —

FIRST PART.

Overture . . . . . *Jomelli.*
Air: "Comfort ye my people," from the "Messiah" . *Handel.*

Chorus: *Motetto*, "O God, when thou appearest" .	*Mozart.*
Air: "Thou didst not leave," "Messiah" . . .	*Handel.*
Chorus: "Lift up your heads"	*Handel.*
Duetto: "Hear my prayer"	*Kent.*
Air: "Oh! had I Jubal's Lyre"	*Handel.*
"Hallelujah Chorus," from "Mount of Olives" .	*Beethoven.*

PART SECOND.

Overture from the Occasional Oratorio . . .	*Handel.*
Recitative and Air	*Handel.*
Chorus: "To thee, Cherubim"	*Handel.*
Solo and Chorus: "Thou art the King of Glory" .	*Handel.*
Air: "Let the bright Seraphim" "Judas Maccabæus,"	*Handel.*
Chorus: "Sing unto the Lord"	*Handel.*

This is, considering the state of musical culture in New York at that time, truly an admirable programme; and many of our present societies might feel proud of a similar one. A critic of that day makes the following remarks regarding the performance. Speaking of the state of music he says, —

"The last winter has been more than usually prolific in the production of sacred concerts of a certain class, and which are, without doubt, calculated to prove useful for practice to those commonly found engaged in the performance of them. . . . But the number of vocalists and performers who are capable of executing the sublime works of the first masters, as well as those persons possessed of taste and judgment to appreciate these compositions when correctly performed, is comparatively small in this city."

A critic of that time, mentioning Mr. T. Petrie, "a professional musician and singer recently arrived in this city," says "that he sung 'Comfort ye my people' to the general satisfaction of everybody;" but his trumpet-playing was appreciated still more. "He proved himself to be a master of his instrument. . . . His exe-

cution on this brilliant and powerful instrument was felt and acknowledged by all." The trumpet was then the favorite instrument of American audiences. Of Mozart's *motetto* our writer says, —

"This composition was never before performed in this country. It is difficult to execute correctly, and possesses inspiring sublimity and grandeur. The effect of the forte parts was almost overwhelming to a great number of the auditors, and will not be soon forgotten. 'Thou didst not leave' was sung by a young lady twelve years old, who bids fair to become an eminent artist."

The first part of the concert closed with the "sublime and majestic chorus from the oratorio of 'Mount of Olives,' which was another of the full pieces that had never before been presented to the musical public of this city. The connoisseurs and critics were all watching with considerable solicitude to hear the splendid effort of genius, and which may be justly ranked among the first compositions of the present day. We believe we may assert with confidence that the expectations of all were fully realized, and, with regard to many of the audience, far exceeded. The effect was indeed grand, and was heightened by the trumpet of Mr. Petrie, and the kettledrums."

The closing chorus was so well sung, that, "by a judicious decision of the conductor," it had to be repeated.

It is truly remarkable to find at this early time a New-York audience, in spite of its predilection for trumpet and drums, "overwhelmed by the splendid efforts" of a Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven! And all credit to the critic who, instead of ignorantly satirizing or fault-finding, used such glowing words of appreciation regarding those masterworks. With such people progress became a natural necessity. The

above concert gave general pleasure, and "indeed it has seldom been seen that an audience at the close of a performance has been found in such fixed attention, and *so little disposed to withdraw*, as on this occasion." Would we could say this of all modern concert-goers!

Messrs. Swindalls and Dyer were the conductors, Mr. Moran the organist. The chorus consisted of fifty singers, the orchestra of twenty musicians, with Mr. E. C. Riley as leader.

It seems that at that epoch chorus-singers, on the whole, thought rehearsals rather irksome. "Many suppose that in getting up a performance it is only necessary to invite sundry persons who are known individually to be correct singers, and that with such assistance their music will be certainly well performed. Without frequent rehearsals this is a most erroneous idea," entertained with great persistence up to our time. People also considered the price of admission to an oratorio — one dollar — too high. To meet this view the "Lyre" remarks, "that every reflecting person will not think it a disproportionate charge, when the amount of talent and labor necessary to the production of a performance on a remarkable scale is impartially considered; and we look forward with fond anticipation to a period when efforts of this kind shall be duly appreciated, and a corresponding liberality be extended to those institutions which have for their object the improvement of sacred music, and the formation of a correct and refined taste throughout the community."

Thus, during the course of more than half a century, the necessity of the promotion of "refined musical taste," and the establishment of prominent musical societies for the cultivation of the higher class of com-

positions, were continually held up to the American people as an ideal goal. Many were the pioneers who generously did their share towards the good work; and many were the victims that succumbed in the noble struggle, leaving to more fortunate successors a better prepared field for abundant harvest. To no *one* man, to no *one* society, belongs the credit of having brought on that reform. Many were the hands that, according to their means, power, and opportunity, industriously labored in order to hasten progress, and favor a finally successful result.

I will here mention a concert given by a Mr. Allen, which took place in July, 1824, in order to illustrate a prevailing custom at that time. The concert was pronounced as of a "class almost unparalleled in the musical history of New York or elsewhere." It was composed entirely of glees, duets, and sacred songs. It took place at St. Matthew's Church. "The exercises were commenced with a very impressive prayer by the Rev. Mr. Summerfield." The artists were the organist Moran, Mr. Petrie with his trumpet, Mrs. Fagan, Mr. Keene, and Mrs. Geaufreau, a harp-player. "It was expected that the Rev. Mr. Cumming would deliver an address or an oration at the commencement of the second part;" but the doctor did not appear, to the great disappointment of "several ladies and gentlemen, who attended the concert *for the express purpose alone* of hearing the excellent and sublime oratory of the learned doctor."

A Philharmonic Society also existed in New York at this time, whose object was "to promote the cultivation of the science of music; to afford facilities for the exhibition of talent, and its advancement to fair compe-

tition among the profession and amateurs." This society was to give two concerts in every year. It was, in fact, a "fund society" for the aid of widows and orphans of deceased members.

Of the Euterpean Society I shall speak in another place.

At this epoch several New-York churches already possessed good organs; and among the organists Moran, Blondell, Taylor were mentioned with distinction. They were mostly English musicians settled in this country. I will give the scheme of some of these organs.

That in Trinity Church, which in point of tone ranked very high, was built by Mr. Holland, London, in 1791. (This must have been a new instrument, replacing the old one mentioned on a previous page.[1]) It had the following disposition of keys: —

Great organ	Open Diapason. Night Horn. Sesquialtra, 3 ranks. Open Diapason to G. Fifteenth. Cornet, 4 ranks. Trumpet.
Choir organ	Stop Diapason. Principal. Dulciana. Flute. Cremona.
Swell organ	Open Diapason. Principal. Trumpet. Stop Diapason. Cornet. Hautboy.

[1] See page 131.

The organ at St. Paul's Church, then one of the finest in the country, was also built in London by Mr. England.

Great organ	Open Diapason. Principal. Fifteenth. Sesquialtra, 3 ranks. Stop Diapason. Twelfth. Tierce. Cornet, 5 ranks. Trumpet.
Choir organ	Stop Diapason. Principal. Dulciana. Flute. Vox Humana.
Swell organ	Open Diapason. Principal. Stop Diapason. Hautboy. Trumpet.

Those built in New York were the St. George's Church organ, built by Th. Hall in 1821, and afterwards enlarged by Hall & Erben. It was considered the largest and most complete in the State.

Great organ	Double Diapason. Stop Diapason. Twelfth. Sesquialtra. Trumpet. Open Diapason. Principal. Fifteenth. Cornet, 5 ranks. Clarion.

Choir organ	Dulciana.
	Principal.
	Fifteenth.
	Stop Diapason.
	Flute.
	Bassoon.
Swell organ to fiddle G .	Double Stop Diapason.
	Stop Diapason.
	Principal.
	Cornet, 4 ranks.
	Hautboy.
	Open Diapason.
	Viol di Gamba.
	Night Horn.
	Trumpet.
	Trimulant.
Pedals to G G	Double Diapason.
	Principal.
	Stop Diapason.
	Coupling Stop.

The organ in Christ's Church, Ann Street, by John Geib, which had the following scheme: —

Great organ	Open Diapason.
	Principal.
	Fifteenth.
	Cornet treble, 3 ranks.
	Stop Diapason.
	Twelfth.
	Tierce.
	Sesquialtra bass, 3 ranks.
	Trumpet.
Swell and choir	Stop Diapason treble.
	Dulciana "
	Hautboy "
	Fifteenth treble and bass.
	Stop Diapason bass.
	Principal treble.
	Flute, treble, and bass.
	Trimulant.

There is one octave and half of pedals which communicate with the bass of the great organ.

Musical life gradually became active in all directions; and the following remarks by a critic of that day will prove the ideas and hopes that were entertained among New Yorkers regarding the future importance of their city: —

"New York, the first city in the Union for commercial enterprise, is now rapidly advancing in the attainment of the arts and sciences. A great attention has lately been paid to the cultivation of music generally, both ecclesiastical and secular; and no doubt is entertained but that it will soon surpass in this science all that has been formerly done in this country."

But to induce the inhabitants of New York to pay more attention to the cultivation of music, in order to gain the desired distinguished position, the following forcible argument is put forth: —

"If it be true that 'Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast,' it is equally so, that, when exhibited in its purity, it has a powerful tendency to refine the bosom of civilization. That both remarks are founded in fact, appears from the attentive observation and deep experience of ages. Some, in all nations, have, by the harmony of sounds, been preserved from vice; others have been reclaimed. . . . Can Handel or Haydn or Mozart, when brought to life by those who enthusiastically admire their genius, and rehearse their lays, contribute aught but purity, sublimity, and heavenly-mindedness to the youthful and to the aged? Good music exerts an influence the most benign. Why, then, is it not more encouraged? We desire to see New York as distinguished for her culture of this noble science, this divine art, as she already is for her commercial enterprise, her public spirit, her enlarged philanthropy, her attachment to the ordinances of God's house, and her astonishing increasing importance."

This was a noble plea for the cultivation of music. The American people gradually threw off the fanatical

restrictions which had injured the growth of the exquisite art imposed on it by the great majority of New-England Puritans. And, if the above writer were living to see New York to-day, he would find "his desire to see New York distinguished for her culture of this noble science" (music) fulfilled.

At this epoch musical societies began to spring up, north, east, and south. This rather sudden musical movement, no doubt greatly fostered by the labors of the Boston Handel and Haydn Society, even caused a good deal of astonishment to the editor of the "Euterpeiad." Speaking of the doings of those different societies, in an article headed "Musical Excitement," he says, —

> "During the last week we noticed the following musical performances that were to take place in the present month of May (1821): 'A concert of sacred music by the Beethoven Society at Portland (Me.), a grand concert at Augusta (Ga.), a select oratorio at Providence by the Psallonion Society, a grand concert of music by the Philadelphia Musical Fund, the grand oratorio the "Creation" by the Harmonic Society of Baltimore, a performance of sacred music by the New-Hampshire Musical Society at Hanover, in Boston an instrumental and vocal concert for the benefit of Mr. Ostinelli, and a public oratorio by the Handel and Haydn Society.'"

The character of the musical work done by all these first American singing-societies was, as a rule, copied from that of English societies. The small rural singing-school, as organized by the psalm-tune teacher, began gradually to disappear; the singing of the simple, but in a harmonic sense, crude hymn-tune did not any longer satisfy the musical ambition of the new generations. Musical Englishmen and women, emigrated to the different parts of the United States, no doubt,

suggested, or actively helped, the organization of singing-societies, and, in many cases, taught the members of these new organizations the manner of singing oratorio choruses and glees as was then done in England.

In order to give my readers an idea of the style of music cultivated by the American amateur at this epoch I will copy the titles of some of the pieces then advertised by music-dealers. John R. Parker of Boston announced in 1821 that he had a "large and extensive variety of choice *fashionable* music, consisting of instruction-books for all instruments," especially the violin, the clarinet, horn, and flute, then the favorite instruments. "Overtures, battles, sonatas, duets for four hands, airs with variations, rondos, songs, glees, catches, sacred songs, original Scotch airs, little ballads, marches, waltzes, dances, Mozart's songs." However, dance-pieces and ballads sold best.

The most popular American song-composer, whom I have already mentioned, seems to have been *O. Shaw* of Providence, the blind singer. He sung his own ballads, such as "Mary's Tears" (which was a great favorite with singers), "The Inspiration," "Apollo thy Treasure," "The Death of Perry," and "Sweet Little Ann."

American musical journals, from the very beginning, found it necessary to publish "fashionable" ballads and instrumental pieces as supplements, in order to attract subscribers. Thus the Boston "Euterpeiad" gave a number of pieces: among others the principal theme of the "Marcia Funebre," of Beethoven's third symphony, appears there as a "Judgment Hymn." The New-York "Lyre" gave, besides ballads and dance-

pieces, "The March," "The Prayer," and the "Hunting Chorus" from Weber's "Freyschütz," arranged for piano-forte and flute, besides our old friend Count Oginsky's polonaise for piano. These things were, of course, all copied from English publications.

CHAPTER VIII.

ENGLISH OPERA IN NEW YORK; FRENCH OPERA IN NEW ORLEANS.

THE immense popularity which the first English ballad-opera, the "Beggar's Opera," [1] gained, from its very first appearance on the London stage, made it, no doubt, desirable for all English theatrical companies to be able to perform it in some manner or other. Thus the "Beggar's Opera" became one of the most useful standard pieces. It was therefore not astonishing to see *Macheath* and *Polly* make their appearance before New-York audiences as soon as musical plays became "fashionable" in the New World. On Dec. 3, 1750, the "Beggar's Opera" was probably produced for the first time upon the New-York stage; and during nearly a century every new English ballad-singer or theatrical company that visited the United States performed it. Thus English opera, in the peculiar form of ballad-opera, as composed by the most popular English composers, preceded the introduction of Italian opera in America by exactly three-quarters of a century.

After this first production of the "Beggar's Opera" all the most popular English ballad-operas successively appeared on the New-York stage. Beside these, most of the musical farces, melodramas, pantomimes, which

[1] See Ritter's History of Music, second edition.

proved successful in London, were also produced in New York. On Jan. 8, 1751, the farce "Devil to pay," and a pastoral "Colin and Phœbe," were sung by Mrs. Taylor and Mr. Woodham in pastoral dress. This seems to have been the first time that a performer's name was mentioned on the play-bill.

In December, 1765, a pantomime ballad, "Harlequin's Vagaries," was performed. This was probably a piece, "Harlequin Faustus," arranged by Rich, of the "Beggar's-Opera" fame, to which Gaillard furnished the musical pieces. On Jan. 11, 1768, Bickerstaff's "Love in a Village" was for the first time given in New York. This also became popular with American audiences. The music to this comic opera was selected and adapted, by Dr. Arne, from Handel, Boyce, Arne, Howard, Baildon, Festing, Geminiani, Galuppi, Giardini, Paradies, Abos, and Agus. May 17, 1773, Bickerstaff's opera, "The Maid of the Mill," was produced. Dr. S. Arnold furnished the music to this piece. This opera was also frequently given in New York. The principal singer in the above two operas was Miss Storer.

In 1791–92 Dibdin's "The Deserter," altered from the French opera "Le Déserteur" by Monsigny, and Sheridan's and Linley's charming "Duenna," were produced. In February, 1793, the opera "The Farmer," words by O'Keefe, the music by Shield, was given. In the same year, Feb. 20, Storace's comic opera, "No Song, no Supper," and on May 22 Dibdin's "The Waterman," were produced. During the season 1793–94 the following pieces were given for the first time in America: "Lionel and Clarissa" (music by Dibdin), the same author's "The Wedding Ring," Arnold's

"Inkle and Yarico," Shield's "Poor Soldier," "Love in a Camp," and "Rosina." The "Beggar's Opera," "No Song, no Supper," and the "Devil to pay" were repeated. This was an active operatic season. The orchestras, of course, were yet small; and James Hewitt was the most esteemed orchestral leader at that time. George Geilfert was considered a popular organist and music-teacher. He also played in the theatrical band.[1] Regarding theatrical bands at this time Dunlap[2] says, —

"As the officers (British, who gave theatrical performances during the occupation of New York about the time of the War of Independence) had musicians at hand in their regimental bands the orchestra was better filled than in the times of the real players."

But, according to the same author, it was the manager-actor Hodgkinson (who often sung in ballad-opera), who introduced better orchestras.

"We have noticed the improvement made by Mr. Hodgkinson in the orchestra at New York, improvements rendered necessary by the excellence of this branch of theatrical arrangement in the rival company of Philadelphia. (The orchestra at Philadelphia, under the direction of Reinagle, who sat at the harpsichord, was much superior to that of New York.) Instead of the 'one Mr. Pelham' and his harpsichord, or the single fiddle of Mr. Hewlett [Hewitt?], performers of great skill filled the bands of the two rival cities. In New York the musicians were principally French; most of these, gentlemen who had seen better days, — some driven from Paris by the revolution, some of them nobles, some officers in the army of the king, others who had sought refuge from the devastation of St. Domingo."

The new operas produced during the season 1794–95 were: Dibdin's "Quaker," Arnold's "The Children

[1] Ireland's Records of the New-York Stage.
[2] Dunlap's History of the American Theatre.

of the Wood," Storace's "The Haunted Tower," Carter's "The Rival Candidates;" also, "Macbeth," with music. Selections of Scotch ballads, arranged by Mr. Carr, were given between the acts. Benjamin Carr was a good English ballad-singer, and made his first appearance before a New-York audience in "Love in a Village." An overture composed by him was performed with success. The orchestra had been enlarged, and the best band collected that ever had been heard in the New-York Theatre. He afterwards settled in Philadelphia, and taught music. About 1815 he published a collection of English, Irish, and Scotch ballads and pieces as sung on the English stage. Carr also adapted music to several pantomimes, — "The Archer," "Poor Jack."

In 1796 were played "Rosina," "The Children in the Wood," "The Maid of the Mill," Reeve's "The Purse" (first time), Shield's "Robin Hood" (first time), "No Song, no Supper," "The Haunted Tower," "The Surrender of Calais," Dr. Arnold's "The Mountaineer" (first time), Attwood's "The Prisoner" (first time), "Poor Soldier," "The Padlock," and an English version of Rousseau's "Pygmalion." The two favorite singers in English opera at this time were Miss Broadhurst and Miss Brett. Miss Broadhurst made her *début* at Covent Garden (London) when quite young. In 1793 she accepted an engagement at the new theatre in Philadelphia. She also appeared in Baltimore, Charleston, and New York. She was second singer in the company, Mrs. Oldmixon being the first. She was genteel and amiable, but had no personal beauty or skill as an actress. She was an excellent musician. When she did not act, she gave lessons on the piano

and in singing. Her voice was a high soprano of sweet quality and good training, and she sung an Italian *aria* as well as an English ballad. She died at Charleston of yellow-fever. On the 12th of February, 1795, Miss Broadhurst and Miss Brett made their first appearance in New York, in the opera of "Inkle and Yarico." Miss Brett was a child in years, but a woman in appearance, with a powerful voice as a singer, but destitute of personal beauty. The season of 1797 presented, besides the repetition of former pieces, Storace's "Siege of Belgrade," [1] Shield's "Fontainebleau," and even a serious drama by a popular poet of the day, to which Carr furnished the music, harmonized and arranged for the band by the leader, Pelissier. On Dec. 5, 1798, Mrs. Oldmixon made her *début* in America in "Inkle and Yarico," and pleased at once. Mrs. Oldmixon, *neé* George, made her *début* in London, at the Haymarket Theatre, when but fifteen years old, as Rosetta, in "Love in a Village," and became at once a great favorite in English operetta. After her marriage she retired from public life until she visited America, where she played and sung in Charleston, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. She was a good actress as well as singer. Her voice had great compass, and was of a sweet, round quality of tone. She sung with much finish and taste. After leaving the stage she settled in Philadelphia, where she established a young ladies' academy. She was a highly accomplished lady, and gained the esteem and affection of a large circle of friends. In this season Storace's "Three and the Deuce" was also produced. On the whole, very few operas were given during this year. In 1799 was given

[1] Braham played it last in 1840.

an opera composed in New York, — "The Vintage;" the libretto by Dunlap, and the music by the above-mentioned leader, Pelissier. M. Victor Pelissier was a performer on the horn, and a composer. Mrs. Oldmixon sung in "The Vintage," which was rather successful. In 1800 another American opera — the libretto also by Dunlap, the music by the popular orchestral leader, Hewitt — was given.

During the season 1801 operatic performances were somewhat more frequent. Kelly's "Blue Beard," Reeve and Mazzinghi's "Paul and Virginia," "The Duenna," Shield's "Sprig of Laurel," Kelly's "The Hunter of the Alps," were the principal pieces. This style of English opera was gradually neglected; and only at long intervals were any attempts afterwards made to reproduce on this side of the Atlantic Ocean any of the musical pieces that became popular in London.

In April, 1807, two operettas, "The Siege of Belgrade," and Dr. Arnold's "The Review," — and, later on, Kelly's "We fly by Night," — were sung. In the following year, 1808, Kelly's "Cinderella" and "Forty Thieves," Storace's "Lodoiska," were sung. In 1810 Mazzinghi's "The Exile," and in 1812 "Blue Beard," were revived.

Among the musicians who held a distinguished place in New York about this time was Charles Geilfert, leader of the Park Theatre. He arranged, adapted, and composed music to several plays. He was the son of a German music-teacher, who settled early in New York. For many years during Mr. Geilfert's residence in New York no musical entertainment was thought complete without his name appearing on the programme.

During the season 1813–14 the works of a new

English composer, *Henry Bishop*, began to find their way to the American stage. His "Athis" was produced at the Park Theatre. Later, his "The Miller and his Men" appeared for the first time. In June, 1814, Bishop's "The Farmer and his Wife" was favorably received. "Sprig of Laurel" was revived. In July Bishop's "The Devil's Bridge" was produced in New York. A number of older operettas were revived during the following season (1816–17); such as "Poor Soldier," "Love in a Village," "Review," "Siege of Belgrade," "Blue Beard," Lodoiska," "The Maid of the Mill," "Castle of Andalusia," "The Beggar's Opera." The greater number of these English opera-performances was due to the arrival in America of two eminent English singers, — *Incledon* and *Philips*.

Incledon, the son of a physician, was born in Cornwall, England, in 1750. He was articled to the famous W. Jackson of Exeter, with whom he remained seven years, and under whose direction he became a good musician and an able singer. After leaving Jackson he entered as a midshipman on board the "Formidable," went to the West Indies, and was in several engagements. In 1780 he returned to England, resumed the profession of singer, and made his first appearance on the stage at Southampton in the "Castle of Andalusia." He became so successful that, later on, he was engaged at Covent Garden, where he first appeared in 1790 in "The Poor Soldier." He is said to have had one of the finest bass voices ever heard, and united the greatest science, pathos, taste, and execution. One of his great songs was "The Storm," often mentioned in American papers as the "Sea Song." This was his most masterly and astonishing performance. His style

was so expressive of the horrors of the tempest, and the confusion and despair of the sufferers, that the effect upon the audience was overwhelming. The experience which he had gained while on a man-of-war enabled him to render the imitation with surprising reality. The New-York public, before he first appeared, did not seem to appreciate his artistic merits. When the "Beggar's Opera" was given, the audience was greatly dissatisfied. The piece having not been sung for a long while, its character was not liked. Incledon returned to England in 1818, and died at Worcester in 1826.

Of greater influence on American musical life was the arrival of T. Philips of Dublin. Kelly, in his reminiscences, speaking of Philips, who at one time wished to become his pupil, says, —

"He went to Dr. Arnold, under whose able instruction he became a sound musician and an accomplished singer. He is still in the profession, and by far the very best acting singer on the English stage."

Ireland said of him, —

"To a fine personal appearance he added considerable merit as an actor. His voice was unrivalled for sweetness. He articulated distinctly, and sung with more feeling and expression than any other male vocalist who had been heard here, Incledon only excepted."

Philips made two visits to America, and last appeared at the Park Theatre in June, 1823. Besides appearing in English opera he sung in concerts in New York and Boston. In this latter city he sung the tenor part, when the "Messiah" was first produced in its entirety. He also gave in Boston a course of lectures on singing, illustrated with appropriate specimens. These lectures are reported in Parker's "Euterpeiad." Philips

died in England, Oct. 21, 1841, killed in an accident on the Grand Junction Railway.

During the above-mentioned season the principal operas produced were Jackson's "Lord of the Manor," "The Woodman," "Duenna," "Lionel and Clarissa," "Fontainebleau," Kelly's "Bride of Abydos," and Davy's "Rob Roy." At the close of this season Mrs. Holman sung with brilliant effect "The Soldier tired of War's Alarms," and Bishop's celebrated "Echo Song," accompanied on the flute by Meline. This was on the whole an active musical season for New York.

Another English operatic singer arrived at this time, Miss Catherine Leesugg, a skilful singer, with a fine contralto voice. She afterwards married the comedian, Hackett. The Park Theatre, then (1819–20) the principal theatre in New York, had several able singers at its disposal. Besides the revival of old operas, new pieces were from time to time produced, such as Braham's "English Fleet," "The Barber of Sevilla" (the music adapted by Bishop, probably from Rossini's opera), "The Deserter," etc. During the season 1820–21 Bishop's opera "Henry IV." seems to have been the only new piece brought out. About this time Mr. Ritchings, whom we shall meet repeatedly in English operatic performances, arrived in America. The singer, Mr. Philips, appeared also in several old operas, as well as in Kelly's "Russian" and Bishop's "Montrose."

In 1823 Philips appeared for the last time on the American stage in the "Duenna." In the course of this season many of the old favorite operas were revived: Bishop's "Maid Marian" and the "Marriage of Figaro," with Mozart's music, but adapted by H.

Bishop, were given for the first time. The principal new singer in these pieces was Mr. Pearman, a native of Manchester, England. He also sung in different concerts during his stay in New York.

On Nov. 12, 1823, was also produced for the first time Howard Payne's drama "Clari, the Maid of Milan" (which contains the now famous song, "Home, Sweet Home"), with appropriate musical pieces composed or adapted by H. Bishop. Mr. Pearman and Mrs. Holman sung the vocal music in "Clari." In 1824 Miss Kelly, the sister of the Irish singer and composer, made her first appearance on the New-York stage. She sung in different well-known English operas.

On March 3, 1825,[1] an attempt was made to bring out Weber's "Freyschütz," with Miss Kelly as Bertha (Agatha), and Mrs. Luce, the wife of the orchestral leader, as Linda (Aennchen). Of course the opera was not given in its entirety: parts of it were "adapted." The piece seems to have had a long run. The incantation scene was the great theatrical excitement of the day. At this time an opera, "The Saw-mill," by a New-York musician, was also produced. In fall, 1825, Garcia, with his company of fine Italian artists, appeared in New York, and gave the Americans a taste of Italian opera. There is no doubt that all those English singers who visited America previous to Garcia had a great influence on the growth of musical taste in New York. They rendered New-York audiences in a considerable degree able to appreciate fine singing; and the English opera, half-play, half-music, helped to pave the way to the Italian opera, in which music reigns supreme.

[1] Mr. R. G. White incorrectly dates this as 1823 in his article "Opera in New York," in the "Century" for March, 1882. The "Freyschütz" was first performed in England, July 20, 1824.

While the above-mentioned desultory performances of English operettas were taking place in New York and other cities French comedians were endeavoring to introduce French lyrical drama in the capital of Louisiana, *New Orleans*, which was founded in 1717 by Bienville, and originally settled by French colonists. Though in 1803 it was ceded to the United States, a great part of the population remained French, introducing French social customs and French theatrical entertainments, among which the opera played a conspicuous *rôle* during the winter season.

In 1791 the first regular company of French comedians arrived at New Orleans. From 1791 to 1808 little is known of the dramatic and musical history of the city; but it is safe to presume that light musical farces and operatic pieces were enacted from time to time, for the early performers were singers as well as actors. There was a theatre fronting on St. Peter Street in the year 1810; and on the 12th of July of that year the opera of "The Barber of Seville" [1] was sung by French artists; and on the 6th of August following the opera of "Romeo and Juliet" [2] was presented. The theatre was advertised under the name of the "spectacle;" but none of the casts of operas have been preserved, so far as is now known. There was a much better theatre constructed in St. Philip Street, which stood where the schoolhouse of that name now stands; and it was known as the Theatre St. Philippe. It was opened in 1808 for the production of opera, drama, and ballet, and was owned by a Frenchman named Croquet. The theatre, or opera-house (for it was used for both pur-

[1] Paisiello's work. Rossini's was first produced in 1816.

[2] Probably Zingarelli's opera. Steibelt wrote one on the same subject.

poses), had two circles and a parterre, accommodating seven hundred persons with seats. In those days it was regarded as a convenient place of amusement, and was the best in the province. All the operas current at that time were presented by artists who had been engaged by the manager abroad. John Davis, from St. Domingo, arrived in New Orleans in 1811, and thereafter projected a grand opera-house, which was so far completed as to be opened in the year 1813. This erection, named the Theatre d'Orleans, was a substantial one of brick, much larger than the one in St. Philip Street, and had all the scenic and mechanical appliances such as were used in similar establishments in Europe at that time. Operas three nights a week, and plays on the off nights, rendered in the French tongue, furnished the chief artistic amusements of the inhabitants of the small but growing city. The new Theatre d'Orleans, in the course of a few years, crowded the St. Peter-street theatre out of existence. The first play spoken in the English tongue by a regular company of actors in New Orleans was at the St. Philippe, Dec. 24, 1817, where N. M. Ludlow's company from the West performed Tobin's comedy of "The Honeymoon." Mr. James H. Caldwell came to New Orleans and in January, 1820, opened the same theatre with an English comedy company; but the Orleans being the favorite house he leased it on the off nights of the opera, and abandoned the St. Philippe Theatre, which was afterwards changed to a ball-room.

Within four years from its erection Mr. Davis's fine large theatre in Orleans Street fell a prey to the fiery element; and he immediately set about the task of erecting a new opera-house on the site of the old one.

The new Theatre d'Orleans that replaced the former one was a massive edifice of brick, costing $180,000, and was said to be the grandest play-house on the continent. Mr. Davis opened his magnificent establishment for the first season during the winter 1818–19, and altogether his career as a manager extended over a period of twenty-five years; and he was followed by Charles Boudausquié. These managers took pride in saying that they presented French grand opera in all its purity. Nor was this all; for during many years it was customary for a fine company of French actors to appear in comedy, drama, and ballet on the three or four nights of each week of the season when the stage was free from operatic performances. Artists, both operatic and dramatic, of a high order of excellence were brought out from Paris at the beginning of each season; and the scenery and costumes were the best that money could purchase. Under the direction of these great managers the masterpieces of Rossini, Mozart, Spontini, Méhul, and others were rendered in a faultless manner.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAST REPRESENTATIVE PSALM-TUNE TEACHERS.

THE newly established and rising musical societies throughout New England and the Middle States struck a higher key-note with regard to the character and style of the works they endeavored to study. They were no more satisfied with the psalm-tunes and weak anthems that formed the principal stock of the old "singing-school;" but in order to do justice to the compositions of the great masters efficient chorus-singers had to be formed. Now the field of labor of the old psalm-tune teacher became gradually enlarged, and the function raised to the importance of that of a music-teacher. The narrow circle — it cannot be called an art circle — in which the American psalm-tune composer once moved was in course of time swept away by the progress which was fostered by new forces procured from European art-development; and only when a new and broader basis of musical culture had been gained could the native American musician and composer appear with better and more effective tools.

Though the history of the labors of the following psalm-tune teachers falls within the next period of this narrative I have nevertheless found it advisable to assign it a place in this period. These men received their first musical impressions, and consequently the

bent of their professional career, under the influence of the first psalm-tune teacher's school. That peculiarly American musical field attracted them; and the good they were able to accomplish in the interest of musical cultivation was done on the basis of sacred music as they understood it.

It is rather difficult to fix the professional position of these men from an artistic point of view. They were, in the real acceptance of the terms, neither composers nor performers. Their efforts in composition consisted of adapting, arranging, or writing short psalm or juvenile tunes, or in compiling psalm-tune collections or manuals for the instruction of church-choir singers or Sunday-school children. As performers they were generally satisfied with the ability to play a little on the violin, clarinet, flute, violoncello, piano, or organ,—just enough to enable them to assist their pupils in finding the pitch of the notes, or to help their own coy imagination in the fashioning of little simple sacred glees. Music had only meaning for them as far as it served religious service: music afforded them pleasure only when connected with some religious office. Musical beauty was only unreservedly recognized by them when it appeared on the basis of some religious subject. Art, for art's sake, was ignored, nay, studiously avoided, by them; in short, it was not understood by them. All such qualities as artistic conception, artistic workmanship, artistic aim, absolute æsthetic beauty, were rejected by them, if not subservient to some religious purpose. The comparatively scant musical knowledge they needed, in order to be able to teach the easily satisfied church-singers, they picked up as they went on teaching. They did not find it necessary to spend

several years of preparatory studies under an efficient master, or in a special school, in order to become masters in their turn. When still struggling with the most rudimentary elements of music they already filled places as teachers to others. They were, however, good disciplinarians, and appealed to the good sense and attention of their pupils in the name of religious work, quoting this or that gospel sentence to strengthen their points: in this they were honest, apparently, and seemed to believe in it. They were the men who were then needed in this country. The degree of their learning was not removed at too great a distance from that of their pupils. Where the accomplished master would have failed, being inclined to require too much from his pupils on account of his own high standard, the psalm-tune teacher succeeded, as he did not require much, on account of his lower ideal. But the labors of these teachers, semi-musical, semi-religious, proved in many ways beneficial to the development of music in this country. They laid the first foundation for the training of the much needed chorus-singer, and made it finally possible for the artistic conductor to step in. It was by means of the chorus material, which the psalm-tune teacher created, that the ranks of the different choral societies were eventually created. The psalm-tunes and sentimental anthems prepared the way for the healthful, inspiring creations of Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven. The American psalm-tune teacher was, as I have remarked in another place,[1] a self-taught man, and gained his musical knowledge chiefly from the perusal of English books on music, and musical journals, that happened to fall in his hands. From these sources he

[1] See page 74.

picked out such ideas, or phrases, as proved useful, to put in his "Primers and Manuals;" and, these being destined for the use of beginners, such ideas and rules had to be very simple in order to reach the inexperienced intelligence of such beginners. The psalm-tune teacher never ascended higher in the theory of music than the acquirement of the mere rudiments of grammar, and the primary knowledge of the chords, consonances, and dissonances. That peculiar American trait of trying to reduce every thing that seems complicated, and takes, as such, considerable time to master, to a great simplicity of system, in order to learn it quickly, and save time, has also induced many of the psalm-tune teachers to endeavor to devise simple and short methods for the study of the rudiments of music. One does away with the lines of the staff; one changes the position of the clefs; another invents new forms of musical characters, — patent notes; now the flats, now the sharps, are found to be too embarrassing to the impatient learner, and are done away with; the whole staff, notes and all, are swept away, and replaced by figures; a teacher becomes aware of the fact that the tenor never finds his place in the four-part setting of a hymn-tune; a new form of clef is invented to obviate that difficulty, etc. And of course we are told, that, by means of such new and "indispensable methods," the study of music will be found to be merely child's play; but after a little while the new system fails to meet the "much-felt want," and is after a little trial again quietly put away. It does not prove a successful speculation; and a sensible return to the "old-fashioned" method is generally the result of all such attempts. The old custom of adding to every psalm-tune

collection an "Introduction to Singing" was still adhered to by this new generation of psalm-tune teachers. It is astonishing how much ink and time have been spent, if not wasted, on such rudimentary matter, by all those busy, speculative psalm-tune compilers, one more superficial and pedantic than the other; each one trying to bring something different from the other.

These "Introductions to Singing" were occasionally enriched by some æsthetic remarks on the desirability of psalmody, or the character of church-music in general; but the music offered at the end of such collections was often a cruel refutation of all the preceding fine phrases and sentiments. The literary teacher was far ahead of the music-teacher and hymn-tune composer. The former knew a great deal more about rhetoric and prosody than about counterpoint and musical forms. His choice of sacred poems, fit for divine service, could be more easily depended on than his judgment and taste in the selection of suitable music. The good points of the sacred words generally served as a cover for the puerility and meaningless foolishness of the music.

The most prominent and most influential among the many psalm-tune teachers of this epoch were *Th. Hastings*, *L. Mason*, and *N. D. Gould*. A study of their lives, labors, and musical aspirations will assist us in the understanding and appreciation of the peculiar American musical situation at this epoch.

Thomas Hastings was born in Washington, Litchfield County, Conn., Oct. 15, 1787. Not having a taste for manual labor or farming, he resolved to become teacher of music "for a few years, in order to obtain means of settling himself in some more safe and eligible [!] em-

ployment." He taught himself the rudiments of music. His first instruction-book was a six-penny "Gamut" (as he called it), of four diminutive pages, and afterwards some elaborate treatise on music, which an elder brother had secured at an auction. He taught at different schools in the villages of his neighborhood. In 1816 he became connected with a county musical association, "The Handel and Haydn Society," of Oneida County, N.Y.; and, as there was a need of musical books, he, in company with Professor Norton of Hamilton College, compiled a collection of tunes in pamphlet form, called the "Musica Sacra," which was subsequently united with the "Springfield Collection." He became successful as a teacher of psalmody, taught in Troy, Albany, and other places in Eastern New York. In 1822 he issued the first edition of his "Dissertation on Musical Taste," of which I shall speak hereafter. In 1823 he removed to Utica, to become editor of the "Recorder," a religious journal. In 1832, after having disposed of his interest in the "Recorder," he removed to New York; having been invited by divers churches to organize church-choirs, and regulate psalmody on a more religious basis. He died in that city May 2, 1872.

Hastings was a man of upright and amiable character, of deep religious principles, and during all his life very industrious. He compiled and published a large number of psalm-tune collections and juvenile hymn-books. He also wrote the words to many hymns: he was considered by some to have been even more successful as a sacred versifier than as a musician. As a teacher of church-music (psalmody) he endeavored to infuse into his pupils' minds a sense of order, punctu-

ality, and industry, and, above all, respect for sacred things.

Though his views on music *as an art* were narrowed down by sectarian prejudice he nevertheless did good service in the interest of musical development among his countrymen, since he endeavored to enforce a distinct, correct singing of those pieces he judged fit for church-service: thus, though in a comparatively small way, he was instrumental in cultivating the musical taste of the choirs he led and instructed. His influence as a teacher of psalmody was at this time felt all over the States; and many of his own settings became popular with congregations. As a composer his chosen field was a restricted one, — simple, *naïve* psalm melodies, simply, and, on the whole, correctly harmonized, and some short anthems. His tunes are not distinguished by any special marks of originality: they are in the vein of the serious, rather too sentimental, popular songs. The frequent use of commonplace cadenzas and trivial melodic passages, betrays the composer's deficient experience in the higher walks of musical art.

Hastings's merits as a writer on music may be appreciated, aside from the prefaces to his many compilations of psalm-tunes, in his two works, — "The History of Forty Choirs" (1854) and the "Dissertation on Taste." The first consists of a number of sketches, illustrating his own experiences with different church-choirs, organists, choir-leaders, pastors, congregations, teachers of psalmody, singing-schools, etc. The book is a faithful picture of the *naïve*, crude, childish, and often ludicrous and would-be "smart" ways and manners of such persons as were then connected with the musical affairs of the church. It is interspersed with his own teach-

ings, counsels, and musico-religious reflections. The incidents, as narrated by the author, will now interest only a few readers, as they are too much spun out, and told in a rather pedantic, monotonous style, copiously seasoned with too much preaching, and presenting little of importance to the musical student. The book is a true mirror of Hastings's musico-religious aim.

"We are not called upon [says he in the conclusion] to depreciate musical excellence, nor to take the extreme position of those who defy art. . . . The claims of art have, on the one hand, been undervalued and despised, and, on the other, exalted to an injurious superiority over the interests of spiritual worship. . . . The office of praise connects æsthetic considerations with devotional sentiments and purposes. We incline to seize upon the former for the purpose of enjoyment, and treat the latter as auxiliary concomitants. Let us reverse the order of things. Let us give devotional considerations the highest place. . . . This subject is rendered the more important at the present day by the increasing attention which is paid to the art in this country."

These views regarding music in connection with church-service the author has still further amplified in his "Dissertation on Musical Taste." The book first appeared in 1822; but, considering the low standard of musical taste among the American people at that time, it found few readers capable of appreciating the author's æsthetic views and endeavors such as they were. The book came too soon. Hastings issued in 1853 an enlarged and somewhat modified edition, without deviating much however from his former æsthetic-religious ground. The musico-philosophical investigations are based on Dr. Burney's writings, "History of Music," "Tour through Germany, Italy, France," etc.; on Avison's "Essay on Taste;" on Busby's writings, "History of Music," "Musical Grammar," "Musical

Dictionary;" on Calcott's "Musical Grammar;" and a few other English musical writers accessible to the American musician.

The philosophical views regarding music's æsthetic functions, though far in advance of the musical understanding of the author's countrymen then, are antiquated and frequently amateurish. The explanations and appreciations of musical forms betray a rather superficial knowledge and understanding of them. The writing of little psalm-tunes had not afforded the composer-author-compiler sufficient opportunity of gaining experience and practice in composing cantatas, sonatas, oratorios, etc. The book is now altogether "behind the times."

Though the musician Hastings is often on the point of saying something substantially commendable here and there about the excellency and beauty of musical art, the sectarian, prejudiced, psalm-tune teacher Hastings becomes apprehensive of the consequence of such artistic teachings, and, in his dilemma, either advances a non-committal opinion or a downright condemnation of the fine art-work. A few quotations from his book will prove this. At the chapter "Oratorio" the author says, from a musico-critical point of view, some truly fine things regarding some choruses of Handel's "Messiah," Haydn's "Creation," Beethoven's "Mount of Olives," and especially the Hallelujah Chorus; but from a religious point of view he finds the whole performance full of misgivings and dangers to the moral aspirations of the pious soul.

"Now the above specimens exhibit unusual genius and dramatic power in their strongest combinations: what shall be said as to religious results? The Hallelujah Chorus, under certain circum-

stances, fills us with such overpowering emotions of grandeur and sublimity as are sometimes [!!] favorable to religious impressions of a more deepened and permanent character; and the same may be said of many a strain which is found in the splendid pages of the oratorio. But what is to be said of the rest of the above specimens? Have they any power over religious tendency? Can any amount of professional merit ever serve to sanctify the influence of profaneness? Can the praise of Dagon, the curses and imprecations of fiends, and the blasphemies of men, themselves like walking demons, be made, through the powers of the musical dramatist, the real auxiliaries of pure and undefiled religion? If so — happy transformation! wonderful power of song! . . . But we shall be told that the oratorio does not claim to be a religious production. It is a work of taste. Music is one of the fine arts, and, as such, it has claims to our patronage and support. No one thinks of attending a religious meeting when he goes to the oratorio. He goes to a musical feast. In England such performances are held in opera-houses and theatres, and this, not for religious purposes, but chiefly to afford suitable employment for theatricals [!!!], who are not allowed to engage in secular dramas during the season of Lent. . . . Such oratorios are called *sacred*, and are founded not unfrequently upon such verbal themes as angels would not use without the deepest reverence and prostration. Let it no longer be pretended, then, that sacred words professionally illustrated by the musician, will of necessity produce religious results."

In a previous chapter we are told that the "nature of church-music forms no exception to the principles of taste already laid down" regarding the forms of secular music. "But music for this purpose (church) should be adapted to the great ends of religion. It should be plain, but not insipid; simple, yet chaste and beautiful; always impressive, yet free from the appearance of labor or affectation." But the author is "not willing to acknowledge excellence in any music of this kind, any further than it can be made to subserve the great ends of religious edification." Hastings says, —

"Music is the language of feeling; and, though we may be disposed on some accounts to think favorably of a composition or performance which is deficient in sentiment, yet, if it is really unimpressive in its influence, it ceases to deserve the name of music."

It will be difficult, indeed, for any musician to compose church-music on the basis of such contradictory æsthetic views and teachings. Whatever the religious sentiments of the musician may be, he first must be (provided he has talent) a thoroughly educated, experienced composer, before he can be able to write fine, impressive music: and if the sacred works of Handel, Haydn, and Beethoven are not fit models for a composer of church-music, then let him lay down his pen; for the psalm-tunes of Hastings, Mason, & Co. will afford him little inspiration, and will excite very little desire for imitation in his musical soul. Music, under all circumstances, *is an art*, capable of expressing all the thousand different shades of man's emotions. It is the composer's business to know his art in its manifold æsthetic aspects, and to express every emotion — the secular as well as sacred — with adequate means. Music's function is not to preach the gospel of religious creeds and morality, but to beautify and make more expressive certain religious emotions: the more artistic excellence it brings, be it simple or rich, to the support of this function, the more effective will be its office.

Hastings says many fine things regarding church-music, his right field. The principles he considers as those that should direct and influence the composer of church-music are, on the whole, acceptable; but, as he excludes all higher forms of musical composition, based upon rich, varied, contrapuntal means, he naturally

stifles the growth of art, and allows it only to live a dwarfish existence.

Judging from Hastings's falsely religious temper the reader will not be astonished at what he says of the opera. Indeed I was surprised that he condescended to mention this form at all. I doubt whether our author, prevented by bigoted scruples, ever was present at an opera-performance. All that he says about it is compiled from English writers on the subject. The ideal expressed is a low one, and he treats it as "having no other permanent advantages, social, moral, political, or commercial" (!), with contempt.

"If the question be asked as to the influence of operas, we answer, that, as splendid pieces of composition, they cannot fail, in some limited circles, to promote the increase of musical learning and refinement. As to their moral influence we class them, of course, where they belong, — among other dramatic works. In our country this species of composition is unknown. It appears among us only as an exotic from other climes, which is a circumstance on the whole not much to be regretted."

Things in the American opera-world have changed since the time when Hastings wrote those words.

When speaking of the larger forms of musical composition his æsthetic views and investigations always are borrowed from some other authority. The student or earnest amateur who looks for æsthetic enlightenment on the subject will be disappointed by Hastings's cold, formal explanations; and such sentences as that concerning symphonies, "that they are excellent subjects for study to professional men, but possess few attractions for the community at large," will excite no one's curiosity to attend symphonic performances. In the same vein our author thinks that "concertos and

songs of execution are useful as tasks for learners, and convenient for the exhibition of talent; and when they pretend to nothing more we can occasionally [!] listen to them with satisfaction. [O shades of Mozart and Beethoven!] Parlor-music, when not intended for the mere exercise of talent, should be adapted to promote moral principles, refined sentiments, and sympathetic emotions." All this is a pretty difficult task, especially the promoting, by means of a sonata, of moral principles *à la* Hastings.

I have dwelt so long on Hastings's æsthetic teachings, because, as I have often had occasion to notice, among many Americans of culture, — laymen, clergymen, and persons who profess to write on musical subjects, — those antiquated, sentimental, and amateurish æsthetic views have been very generally accepted as musico-philosophical truths. Musical cultivation, considered from such a one-sided point of view, will not have much chance to strengthen its growth, and widen its horizon, as one of the fine arts destined to give ideality, elevation, and expression to human feelings and emotions. The American people are fortunately fast wearing out those remnants of puritanical musical "strait-jackets."

Lowell Mason, born at Medfield, Mass., Jan. 8, 1792, was a man of broader and more liberal views regarding music than were those of Hastings. Mason may, to a certain degree, be considered as one of the central figures of American musical cultivation from about 1826 to 1850. His significance as a promoter of musical culture among his people is not so much to be looked for in his own compositions for the church, as in his labors as a teacher and compiler of better choral

music than had been formerly used by church-choirs and singing-societies, as well as editor of practical text-books on the rudiments and theory of music.

His parents intended him for a mercantile life. When yet but a youth he removed to Savannah, Ga., where he resided for nearly twenty years. From his childhood his love for music was manifested. It was, of course, chiefly church-music and some ballads, as then sung in New England, that he practised. While engaged in conducting a choir in Savannah he experienced the need of a collection of church-music, especially adapted to the wants of his choir; and he thus was led to prepare a new collection, compiled from different sources. It seems that a Mr. Abel, a music-teacher in Savannah, gave him valuable assistance in his first musical attempts. Having finished his manuscript he bent his steps towards the North in quest of a publisher; but publishers were not quick to accept the new collection. After several attempts young Mason finally succeeded in securing the assistance of the board of managers of the Boston Handel and Haydn Society, under whose auspices the book was published in 1822, with the title of "Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection," and soon became very popular, running through numerous large editions. The unexpected success which the book met with decided the future career of Mason. He relinquished his former profession, and became a music-teacher. After leaving Savannah he removed to Boston, where, in 1826, we find him lecturing on church-music in different churches. In his new home, where he met many intelligent musical people to learn from, he displayed great energy and even enthusiasm in the cause of musical education.

He became, for a time, president of the Handel and Haydn Society. When the "Boston Academy of Music" was founded, he was placed at the head as its professor. He was partly instrumental in the introduction of music as a branch of common-school education, overcoming deeply rooted prejudices of all kinds and from all sides. Becoming acquainted with the Pestalozzian method of teaching music,[1] and at once seeing its superior advantages over other methods then in use, he became its most ardent advocate. He led conventions and music-teachers' institutes, published a number of church-music collections, prepared manuals, etc. In short, he was a hard worker in the interest of elementary musical education, being convinced that, in order to build up a taste for music, a solid basis must first be laid.

Mason was not a genius, perhaps only an average talent; but he loved music sincerely, and as a composer never attempted to undertake what he saw was beyond his power, confining himself almost exclusively to psalmody, which was then the music of the people. He was a clear-sighted, practical man, just the leader the American people could then understand, and would be willing to follow. He is said to have been kind and generous to young musicians, hoping to see them at some future time occupy a more artistic and influential position among musicians of fine culture and attainments, and thus become the pride of their country. He collected a fine musical library. In 1852 he bought the rare collection of the celebrated organist Rink of Darmstadt.

"The lovers of music [he wrote from Germany],[2] and of its

[1] See page 246.

[2] Musical Letters from Abroad.

progress amongst us, will be glad to know that it is already packed, and will be on its way to America in a few days. If it arrives safely, it must be useful to some of the young men who are looking forward to the musical profession. There are now many young men who are beginning to feel the necessity of a more liberal education for the profession of music than has hitherto been supposed important."

After his death his heirs presented the library to the theological department of Yale College, where it now stands, conveniently arranged, in beautiful bookcases, in a fine room; but made use of by nobody, and most carefully avoided by the young theologians who thus most wonderfully ignore the great advantages the splendid collection would be to them in dispelling their great ignorance about music in connection with divine service, and in opening their eyes to the sentimental nonsense regarding church-music that is so often preached from the pulpits of Protestant churches. But in order to make the right use of this library the young theologians, who would be likely to consult it, need an experienced adviser.[1]

Mason visited Europe twice in 1837 and 1852, in order to make himself acquainted with European musical matter. In 1855 he received the degree of Mus. Doc. from the University of New York. He died at South Orange, N.Y., Aug. 11, 1872.

As a composer Dr. Mason confined himself to the writing of psalm-tunes, short anthems, and songs for children's classes. In all these efforts he strove towards simplicity in melodic and harmonic treatment; in fact, that which he was best able to do. In many of his

[1] Now that I have called public attention to this fine collection I hope to be able to record in a future edition of this work that the library has found more intelligent visitors than moths.

tunes he endeavored to imitate the German *chorale*. His tunes are smooth, of simple rhythmical construction, of rather prosaic expression, which alternates with commonplace sentimentality. There is not much originality about these tunes. The harmonic treatment is confined to the closest related chords, and is, in general, correct. There is not much individual life in his four-part arrangement. Alto and tenor have a predilection for stationary existence. Here and there a modulation into dominant or subdominant, and occasionally into some parallel minor key, is indulged in. He was not much of a contrapuntist: this was, perhaps, to his advantage. The composer Mason observed in his church-music "simplicity and chastity" to a distressing degree. Many of his psalm-tunes are popular with congregations, whose capacity, as congregational singers, they do not exceed. And this is in some way a merit.

Mason willingly received suggestions from such sources as he thought reliable, in order to further his aims as a musical educator of the people. Hastings's "Dissertation on Taste" greatly influenced his views regarding church-music. In his address on "Church-Music," delivered in Boston in 1826, many passages point to views as accepted from the above author. He, like Hastings, undertook to solve the difficult problem, that music, *being an art, must not* be an art when it enters the church.

"*Music is an art* [says he], and is to be regularly cultivated in its own measure, like painting or poetry or sculpture or architecture. We cannot expect to derive benefit from it if we suffer it to be neglected. In the secular department this principle is well understood. . . . It is only the music of the church that is left to take care of itself, or committed to unskilful hands."

Our author thinks, that, "through the medium of music, truth is presented to the heart in the most forcible manner: the feelings are aroused, the affections elevated;" and that "musical taste is much more intimately connected with religious feeling than is generally supposed." But in order to acquire all this, regarding music as an art, —

"It is equally important for those who sing the praise of God to improve themselves in their art if they would awaken devotional feeling in the assembly of God's people. Music does not spring up spontaneously in the human mind, growing with its growth, and strengthening with its strength. It bears more resemblance to the exotic, which requires a delicate and attentive cultivation."

Now to accomplish any thing creditable in musical practice one would suppose that this could be done only by means of talent, and a *good deal* of it, in order to satisfy Mason's requirements.

"A choir-leader should be a competent, if possible a pious, man, at least a man of intelligence, taste, judgment, and influence; one who is well acquainted with the whole subject of church-music, and who is capable of instructing others."

But if any of my readers should happen to have in view any great artist, who composed church-music, as being capable of occupying Dr. Mason's post as choir-leader or organist, he would be vastly mistaken; for says our author, —

"Mere *musical talent* will no more enable a man to *play* than *sing* church-music appropriately; and probably Handel and Bach, two of the greatest performers on the organ that ever lived, would have been as unfit to *accompany* as Braham or Madam Catalani would be to lead a choir of singers in public worship. Execution, or a mere ability to play expertly upon his instrument, is probably not more important to the organist than studied elocution is to

the preacher; and yet this is the only qualification which is generally required. A mere trial of skill often determines the choice; and the man who excels in executing the most difficult passages upon his instrument is appointed to the office."

Mason's organist "must be able to play in a plain and appropriate style, which is not difficult to acquire; and, if he be a finished performer it is all the better, provided he possess the other more important qualifications." Dr. Mason's church-musician, indeed, was a curious compound of capability and incapacity. He was to look upon music, sacred as well as secular, as an art; but, if he was suspected of artistic temperament and accomplishment, he had little chance to gain the position of organist or choir-leader in Mason's church. Handel and Bach, Braham and Catalani, could not acquire such a distinction; but a musical blockhead, able "to play in a plain way," yet possessing the other more important qualifications of "being a pious and *influential* man," was infinitely preferable. (It is, indeed, very incomprehensible to me, why an anthem or hymn-tune set with art, and having æsthetic beauty and expression, must be regarded as less sacred than a simple, prosaic, insipid psalm-tune.) Dr. Mason's ideal church-musician was then easily to be found, and very easily drilled for his office. No wonder our philosopher's views became very popular among American music-teachers. He was regarded as the apostle of a new art theory, which has still in our time many warm adherents.

Later in life, and with more experience, Mason became convinced that a good musician, organist, or singer may very well be able to do justice to the expression of words and music, whether sacred or secular,

without being a religious man, in the narrow acceptance of that term among New-England psalm-tune singing-teachers. Having heard Carl Formes sing the the bass part in the "Messiah" at the Birmingham Festival in 1852 he wrote in his letters,[1] —

"How delicate! how subdued! how distinct in utterances! The mouth is opened so that both tones and words flow freely. The very heart 'runneth out of the mouth.'"

And yet Formes could not very well be pronounced a deeply religious man or churchman. But he at that time was a good singer, who, as a true artist, served his art in the best way possible. Out of church Mason thought more liberally of music.

"Now we do not complain that secular music is cultivated [says he in the above address]: on the contrary, we rejoice in its progress; for this, as well as the other fine arts, affords a rational and refined amusement. It is the source of exquisite delight to the man of taste and cultivation; and it undoubtedly contributes to the happiness and moral improvement of man."

Mason's theory about church-music exactly fitted his *savoir-faire* as a composer. Had he had the opportunity early in life of becoming better acquainted with the difficult technical studies of a composer, he, without discarding the main points of his views about church-music, would, no doubt, have done justice to music as *an art* whether in the church or in the concert-room. A true composer is better able than a poor one to do "the right thing in the right place." Many of Mason's tunes, separated from their associated sacred words, have not more sacredness about them than many a simple ballad-tune; nay, many of them even sound

[1] Quoted above.

somewhat vulgar. Had he had a better educated, truer musical taste, and had he been able to remedy his deficiency as a composer by more practical experience, many of his tunes would not have been published as they stand. I think Dr. Mason's greatest merits as a musician are to be looked for in his labors as a musical educator of children. More of this in another place, however.[1]

Nathaniel D. Gould, born in 1789 at Chelmsford, Mass., was a very popular and active psalm-tune teacher. He compiled several collections of church-music, composed and adapted psalm-tunes and juvenile songs, and published instruction-books and a "History of Church-Music in America." His own tunes are no better and no worse than those of his contemporaries. He seems to have been a well-meaning, good-natured, honest worker in his chosen field. And with regard to the juvenile singing-schools, he appears to have anticipated Lowell Mason's labors in that field. Here is his own testimony to that effect: —

"The writer is constrained to say, that, if he has any one thing more than another that he can look back upon with satisfaction, during a long life, it is the fact that he was the first to introduce the teaching of children to sing. His first juvenile schools were in Boston, Cambridge, and Charlestown in the year 1824. After teaching three or four years, L. Mason, Esq., came to Boston, commenced teaching on a small scale at first," etc.

And further on he remarks that —

"It may savor somewhat of egotism, but he trusts that it will be a gratifying reminiscence to those who have been members of the [his] schools, numbering no less than fifty thousand."

[1] See p. 244.

Gould's "History of Church-Music in America," 1853, — his principal work, — is unfortunately extremely diffuse in style, and formless in the arrangement of matter. The author rambles about like a good-natured, talkative child; enumerating, at great length, all his experiences as psalm-tune teacher. The historical facts (if we may term them historical) are thrown about pell-mell, and the reader has to be on his guard continually, lest he may be led astray; Gould having accepted any statement without the least critical judgment or inquiry. We meet in the book with much talkativeness about theological matter, and with comparatively little that has any historical or artistic value. It is, nevertheless, in a certain way, a true mirror of musical affairs in New England at Gould's time. The reader, however, in order to gather a few useful facts, has to wade through endless pages of mere self-complacent talk. Church-music is confined to that sentimental-religious position assigned to it by Hastings and Mason. It ought to be sweet, simple in its expression, and must not attempt to do any of Billings's "tickling the ear" of the congregation. The book is already antiquated, and of little worth.

The above three men — Hastings, Mason, and Gould — will serve as the representative psalm-tune teachers of this epoch. All the rest — such as Dyer, Woodbury, Johnston, Bradbury, Ives, etc., teachers, compilers, or composers of hymn-tunes — may be considered as the disciples or imitators of the above three representative men. They all helped in a small way to promote a taste for singing among their countrymen. They were the necessary links betwen the first crude steps and the present advancement of musical culture in America.

The psalm-tune music-teacher has fulfilled his mission. We honor him for what good he was instrumental in doing. But a higher standard in musical art culture has rendered him useless. Let him now retire, and leave the road clear for a broader-minded and more artistic generation of successors.

In the time of Hastings, Mason, Gould, the New-England psalm-tune teacher thought, on the whole, little of the professional musician, who was not able to quote the Bible on each and every occasion, and who could not lead a revival meeting. The professional musician, on the other hand, thought little of the psalm-tune teacher, who, in general, could not play, sing, or compose in the sense of the musician. He, if business interest did not prevent him, treated with ridicule the weak, sentimental, commonplace psalm-tunes with which the ordained psalm-tune teacher overflowed the land. The educated professional musician, sure of his more elevated, artistic ground, incessantly preached the gospel of true art; and music, having always been the helpmate of religion, should necessarily be able to serve this more effectively, the more it approaches its own ideal aim as a purified art. L. Mason, to his own credit must it be said, gradually grew up to this more artistic understanding; for in many of his letters we perceive an ardent leaning towards this side of the question. And the more this understanding and appreciation of music's real nature and function become general among the American people, the less will true musical culture, even with regard to church-music, be hampered by the narrow views of the half-educated, amateurish psalm-tune teacher. An organist or leader of a church-choir must be first, of course, a good man; next,

a thorough musician, who respects his mission as an artist. This mission, being, so to say, an art-religion, will not and *can not* be in opposition to religion itself. The musician ought not to be a sectarian; but an honest, large-minded Christian, who endeavors to fulfil his duties without canting, and with dignity, decorum, and enthusiasm. His business is not to look after the spiritual welfare of the members of his choir, or that of the congregation: this he ought to leave to the clergyman, whose proper duty it is. The musician should endeavor to adorn that part of divine service calling for musical expression, with beautiful, noble, elevated music. If he be not capable of doing this, either from want of conviction or the necessary knowledge, then he has as little right to enter the organ-gallery as to step on the platform of the concert-room, or as an immoral clergyman has a right to enter the pulpit.

We ask from the true artist and man on all occasions honesty of purpose, love of, and respect for, his art!

FOURTH PERIOD, 1825–1842.

THE INTRODUCTION OF ITALIAN OPERA.

CHAPTER X.

THE OPERA IN NEW YORK.

About the beginning of this century some distinguished Italians, musicians as well as *literati*, settled in the United States, especially in New York. They had been compelled, either for political or unfortunate social reasons, to seek a refuge in New York. Among these *Filippo Trajetta* and *Lorenzo Da Ponte* present the most importance for us, they having been, in a great measure, instrumental in hastening the introduction of Italian opera in the United States. Filippo Trajetta was born in Venice in January, 1776. He was the son of the distinguished Italian composer, Tomaso Trajetta, and was only in his third year when his father died. He received a good education, studying music merely as an accomplishment. Circumstances, however, led him to take it up afterwards as a profession. He studied under different masters, and last under the famous Piccinni. About the time of the French Revolution he joined the Italian patriotic army, was afterwards taken a prisoner by the royalists, passed eight months in a

horrible dungeon, and finally escaped on board of an American vessel bound for Boston. He arrived at Boston in 1799, and settled there, teaching singing. Later he went to New York. He subsequently became a theatrical manager in the Southern cities, and finally settled in Philadelphia, where he died in 1854.

Trajetta composed and produced, mostly in Philadelphia, oratorios and operas; also his once celebrated Washington's Dead March. When the Garcia troupe was in New York Da Ponte induced him to come and compose for them; but on his arrival in that city he found the company disbanded. He was active and influential as an Italian singing-teacher, and published in Philadelphia "Rudiments of the Art of Singing, written and composed for the American Conservatorio," an institution then established in that city by Trajetta's pupil, Uri K. Hill. He also contributed a number of singing exercises to the "Solfeggio Americano, a system for the American Conservatorio, with a variety of psalm-tunes suited to every metre, composed and collected by Uri K. Hill. Copyrighted in the Southern District of New York on the 7th of January in the forty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States." The author and compiler of the book advocates the Italian manner of sol-fa-ing in preference to the one then used in America.

"A parallel may be drawn [says he in the advertisement] between the sol-fa-ing of this country and some parts of England, and the Italian system of solfeggio which has been used for centuries in every other part of Christendom, except in Germany; and has for many years been re-instated by the English public to the exclusion of the defective sol-fa-ing above mentioned. The favorable impression which the Italian has made on the American public is at once evidence of its superiority."

A still more checkered career was that of Trajetta's countryman, *Lorenzo Da Ponte*, the poet of the libretti to Mozart's "Don Giovanni," "Cosi Fan Tutti," and "Figaro." He was born March 10, 1749, at Ceneda, in the Republic of Venice. He passed some years at Venice, afterwards at Treviso, as professor of rhetoric; but having spoken against the government of the Republic he was ordered to leave. He then went to Vienna where, probably through the influence of Salieri, he became poet to the imperial theatre, and wrote, among others, the above libretti for Mozart. After the death of Joseph II. he went to Paris (1792); but finding that city in the turmoil of revolution he went to London, where he became teacher of the Italian language, and poet to the Italian opera. Here, however, he soon got into trouble, and found it advisable to emigrate to America, where he arrived in May, 1805. He settled in New York as a dealer in tea, tobacco, and drugs, but failed. He then took up the profession of teacher of the Italian language. In 1811 he established at Sunbury, Penn., a manufactory of liquors; lost money again, and settled down as an Italian teacher.

I have often seen it stated in different American papers that it was at the invitation of Da Ponte that Garcia was induced to visit New York; but this was not the case. When Garcia arrived here he was at once visited by Da Ponte, who introduced himself as "the auther of the libretto of Don Giovanni, and the friend of Mozart." Garcia embraced Da Ponte, singing, "Fin ch' han dal vino," the beginning of the "Champagne" aria. In an article published in a Venetian newspaper of Jan. 25, 1830, and translated for the "New-York Evening Post," we find the follow-

ing remarks, concerning Da Ponte's position in New York:—

"Lorenzo Da Ponte, the Nestor of the Italian *literati*, is now living in America. Through the labors and exertions of this distinguished native of Ceneda our admired language is spoken by some thousand persons of that country; and Dante and Petrarca and our best authors are known and studied on the Hudson as they are under our own beautiful sky. Many years since he established in New York, and in that city first introduced the Italian literature by there instituting a school and library; the latter of which he continues to augment at considerable expense, and by his own exertion. . . . But not satisfied with having imparted to the Americans a share of our literary wealth he has contributed much to the introduction of *Italian music* into his adopted country, having invited thither one of his nieces, Giulia Da Ponte, a pupil of the celebrated Baglioni . . . Signor Da Ponte, who is in his advanced age, still possesses all the enthusiasm and fire of youth, is now engaged on a regular dramatic work, in which his niece is to take the principal part, and which he will probably adapt to the music of one of Rossini's beautiful operas. Other artists are expected from London and Italy, so that the Italian opera bids fair to be permanently established in America."

I shall have occasion later to refer to Da Ponte's opera management. This article, most probably inspired by him, would not have failed to mention his business connection with the Garcia company, had any then existed. In his "Memorie"[1] he says,—

"Or qual fu l'allegrezza mia quando assai persone m'assicurarono che il lodato Garzia, colla sua impareggiabile figlia, e con alcuni cantanti Italiani, viniva da Londra in America, e appunto a New York, per estabilervi l'opera musicale Italiano, ch'era il desideratum del mio sommo zelo?"[2]

[1] Vol. iii. p. 42.

[2] "How delighted I was when many persons assured me that the celebrated Garcia, with his matchless daughter, and several other Italian singers, were coming from London to America to appear in New York, in order to establish Italian opera, which was the greatest desideratum of my greatest zeal!"

Thus it will be seen the news of Garcia's coming to America reached him through other persons. The Irish singer, Michael Kelly, who met Da Ponte at Vienna, gives in his "Reminiscences" [1] the following picture of the poet: —

"It was said, that, originally, he [Da Ponte] was a Jew turned Christian, dubbed himself an abbé, and became a great dramatic writer. . . . My friend the poet had a remarkably awkward gait, a habit of throwing himself (as he thought) into a graceful attitude by putting his stick behind his back, and leaning on it. He had also a very peculiar, rather dandyish, way of dressing; for, in sooth, the abbé stood mighty well with himself, and had the character of a consummate coxcomb. He had also a strong lisp and broad Venetian dialect."

In his later years he taught the Italian language at Columbia College, and died at New York, Aug. 17, 1838.

These men and events, however, prepared the way for the introduction of Italian opera on the New-York stage. Italian opera then reigned supreme in all the principal capitals of Europe. It was thought that New York, with its already large foreign population, would readily sustain a yearly season of Italian opera. American merchants, having frequently had occasion to visit European cities in the interest of commercial enterprise, had become acquainted with European musical matters. They frequented concerts given by the greatest artists, went to the opera, and were, no doubt, thrilled with delight by the achievements of the great singers they thus had an opportunity of hearing. They brought home with them those artistic impressions received abroad; and some of them, no doubt, thought

[1] Vol. i. p. 235.

it would be delightful to have such dazzling and "highly fashionable" entertainments in their own rising city.

The first serious attempt to establish Italian opera in New York was made on Nov. 29, 1825, when *Manuel Garcia* brought over a company consisting of himself and the younger *Crivelli*, tenors; his son *Manuel Garcia* and *Angrisani, bassi cantanti; Rosich, buffo caricato;* Madame *Barbieri*, Madame *Garcia*, soprani; and her daughter *Marietta* (Malibran), contralto. Rossini's "Il Barbiere," the opera chosen for the introduction of the company to an American audience, was almost entirely performed by the Garcia family. The elder Garcia played Almaviva; his daughter, Rosina; his son, Figaro; his wife, Bertha; Rosich, Bartolo; Angrisani, Basilio; Crivelli, Fiorello. Mr. Price was the manager. The orchestra was composed of the following musicians: violins, De Luce (who was the leader), W. Taylor, Milon, Hill, Dumahault, Hollaway, jun., Morière; violas, Hollaway, Nicolai; cello, Bocock, Moran, Gentil; double bassi, Greer, Davis; flute, Blondeau, P. Taylor; clarinet, Mertine, Beck; bassoon, Hornung; horn, Eberle, jun., Eberle, sen.; trumpet, Metz, Peterson; kettledrum, Carroll. M. Etienne, whom we have already met, presided at the piano-forte. This was altogether rather a large band for the time. Very few German players belonged to the above orchestra.

London critics did not think very highly of Garcia's company. The "Harmonicon," among others, wrote that an agent (Mr. Lynch) of Mr. Price, the wide-awake and active theatrical manager of New York, had come to England to engage Italian singers to give operas

there; he was, however, not very lucky, and could only engage young Crivelli, who sang only second parts in London. Mr. Price is said to have engaged M. and Madame Garcia and their son and daughter. The writer, in the journal above referred to, thought it difficult to understand how operas could be given with these restricted means. Demoiselle Garcia was certainly an able singer, but her voice was an alto and not a soprano, which would still be wanting. No one could depend much on the father, who often suffered from hoarseness, and was no longer in his best years. Madame Garcia had appeared, a few years ago, in second parts in Paris; she tried it afterwards in London, but was not successful. The son had not appeared as yet in public. But since "our trans-Atlantic cousins" have had, so far, little experience in this kind of musical representations, they may be easily satisfied. The high terms, which are said to be made with artists, passes all belief. So far England has been laughed at by the other European nations on account of the ridiculously large sums paid to foreign artists. But, if the gossip regarding the above contracts should prove true, it will be America's turn to be laughed at. America, however, got the last laugh after Malibran's great success.

America keeps on paying "ridiculously large sums" to foreign opera singers, and the terms are increasing annually.

Now let us see what New York critics had to say after the first performance of the Garcia company.

"An assemblage of ladies," says Ireland,[1] "so fash-

[1] This criticism is gathered partly from the "Evening Post" of Nov. 30, 1825, and partly from the "New York Review" for December the same year.

Mr. R. Grant White also says in a note, "There was then but one theatre in

ionable, so numerous, and so elegantly dressed, had probably never been witnessed in an American theatre;" and according to the following extracts from newspaper articles that appeared after this first performance, the audience seems to have been in ecstasy over the whole affair: —

"We were last night surprised, delighted, enchanted; and such were the feelings of all who witnessed the performance. The repeated plaudits with which the theatre rung were unequivocal, unaffected bursts of rapture. The signorina seems to us as being a new creation, — a cunning pattern of excellent nature, equally surprising by the melody of her voice, and by the propriety and grace of her acting. The best compliment that can be paid to the merit of the company was the unbroken attention that was yielded throughout the entire performance; except that every now and then it was interrupted by judiciously bestowed marks of applause, which was simultaneously given from all parts of the house. In one respect the exhibition excelled all that we have ever witnessed in any of our theatres, — the whole troupe were almost equally excellent; nor was there one whose exertions to fill the part allotted to him did not essentially contribute to the success of the piece. . . . Signor Garcia indulges in a florid style of singing; but with his fine voice, fine taste, admirable ear, and brilliancy of execution, we could not be otherwise than delighted. We cannot avoid expressing our wonder and delight at the powerful, low, and mellow tones of Signor Angrisani's bass voice, or rather of his 'most miraculous organ,' of which we never before heard the equal. . . . Signorina Garcia's voice is what is denominated in the Italian a fine contra-alto; and her science and skill in its management are such as to enable her to run over every tone and semi-tone of three octaves with an ease and grace that cost apparently no effort. She does not adopt the florid style of

New York." This is a mistake. Both Ireland in the work quoted, and Wemyss in Chronology of the American Stage, assert that in 1824 the Chatham-street Garden Theatre was built, and occupied by theatrical troupes. In 1831 a French opera company from New Orleans gave representations there. Consequently there must have been *two* theatres in New York in 1825.

her father, but one which is less assuming, and perhaps more proper in a lady, and hardly less effective. Her person is about the middle height, slightly *embonpoint;* her eyes dark, arch, and expressive; and a playful smile is almost constantly the companion of her lips. She was the magnet who attracted all eyes and won all hearts."

In the course of the season they brought out "Otello," "Romeo e Julietta," "Il Turco in Italia," "Semiramide," "Don Giovanni," "Tancredi," "La Cenerentola," and two operas of Garcia's composition, "L'Amante Astuto" and "La Figlia del' Aria." Garcia's company gave during the season seventy-nine representations partly at the Park Theatre, and partly at the Bowery Theatre. The prices of admission were: boxes, $2; pit, $1; gallery, 25 cents. The total receipt for the season was $56,685. The largest receipt a night was $1,962, the smallest $250. But in spite of the apparent first success of the Garcia opera venture he could not keep his company long in New York. On Sept. 30, 1826, he gave his last performance, and afterwards went to Mexico.

Signorina Maria Garcia, who married Malibran on March 23, 1826, remained in New York. On Sundays she sung at Grace Church, and occasionally appeared in English operetta at the Bowery Theatre. The private and professional trials that succeeded her first successes in New York are so well known that I need not refer to them more.

Before proceeding with my historical narrative of the Italian opera in New York, the following remarks regarding the attitude of the American people towards this art-form seem to me to require a place here: —

The permanent establishment of this species of entertainment on the American stage has, since the above first serious trial, proved a very difficult problem to solve. The existence of the Italian opera here has been always a capricious, fluctuating, uncertain one. Manager after manager has tried his hand at it, but almost without exception seems to have encountered final disaster and ruin.

The Italian opera, which grew up under conditions entirely foreign to the nature and habits of the American people, has never succeeded in gaining a solid foothold in the New World. The ideal lyrico-dramatic meaning of the complicated form, developed in the course of two centuries, by the fostering care of princely courts, has not been appreciated or understood by young, inexperienced American audiences. The dazzling scenic splendor, the brilliancy of the music rendered by eminent singers, astonished and bewildered them at first. The imagination of the American citizen was still weighed down by the *too* almighty dollar, and the trials of pioneer times. The nature of this art exotic was foreign to his nature. If he seriously attempted to get at the meaning of the æsthetic and dramatic form of the Italian opera, his clear mind could not discover any utility in it. It was thought to be the "fashionable thing to do" to go to the Italian opera. He therefore went; for the American, as a general rule, would rather be bored to death than be thought unfashionable. It is ludicrous to read articles in, and communications to, some of the New-York papers about the time of the first opera-performances, giving advice, asking questions how to dress in a fashionable way for the opera-night, according to the European manner,

and how to behave during an opera-performance. The whole affair created great excitement among the fashionables of Manhattanville. But after the first flush of mere excitement and novelty, as created by the first opera "exhibitions" the re-action set in; and the people became indifferent again to the charms of the Signorina Garcia and her artistic companions. If the inquisitive American looked in a critical way at the intellectual meaning of the Italian opera, he found little to satisfy his mind. On the contrary he found it ridiculous — if he succeeded in getting at the plot of the fantastical libretto — to see a singing actor making such a fuss about killing himself or somebody else on account of some unsuccessful love affair, but who could not accomplish his bloody design on account of too much singing. He wondered why two lovers, having a secret to tell each other, should go about shouting it in endless repetitions and endless cadenzas. He became impatient with a troop of soldiers, thundering ferocious, threatening war-songs, but who, having so much to sing, could not move a step from their post. All these things were a mystery to him, puzzled and bewildered him. They on the whole appeared to him "much ado about nothing."

The following passage by Addison [1] can justly be applied to the first American opera audiences:—

"There is nothing that has more startled our English audience than the Italian recitative at its first entrance upon the stage. People were wonderfully surprised to hear generals singing the word of command, and ladies delivering messages in music. Our countrymen could not forbear laughing when they heard a lover chanting out a *billet-doux*, and even the superscription of a letter

[1] "Spectator," p. 29.

set to a tune. The famous blunder in an old play of 'Enter a king and two fiddlers solus' was now no longer an absurdity, when it was impossible for a hero in a desert, or a princess in her closet, to speak any thing unaccompanied with musical instruments."

Though the American amateur began to admire the beautiful singing of Italian artists, he, at the same time, wished to know "what it was all about;" and there his ignorance of the Italian language proved a great impediment to his curiosity. But a still greater obstacle to the successful establishment of Italian opera in America was for a long time encountered among church-people; and the great majority of American people are so-called church-people. This American expression of two words may be translated in plain English into one, — "puritanical;" that is to say, "church-people," as the term still holds good among many, does not simply mean "good, true, honest, devout, kind-hearted, — in one word, *Christian*," — people: but it rather possesses a technical than a purely religious meaning. "Church-people," in the full acceptance of the words that formerly held good, signifies strictly devoted to the rules and tenets of a sect, with puritanical ideas in the conduct of life superadded, and consequently opposed to all æsthetic tendencies that cannot be rendered absolutely subordinate to ecclesiastical power. The clergymen warned their congregations against patronizing an entertainment which they considered immoral and full of worldly temptations. The pious psalm-tune teachers preached in the same vein against the opera,[1] and yet they often found it convenient to transform this or that pretty opera air into a psalm-

[1] See Hastings in a preceding chapter.

tune. The remnant of the old puritanical hatred against all theatrical plays became aroused when America was threatened with the introduction of the costly, brilliant, dazzling opera.

But these were not the only serious obstacles which an American opera-manager had to face. Others still more serious stood in the midst of his thorny road, such as insufficient stage arrangements, inadequate opera-houses, incomplete orchestras, untutored, inexperienced chorus-singers, the great expenses which the bringing over of a whole opera company entailed. The manager, in order to be able to cover his great outlays, was obliged to ask a proportionately high entrance-fee. People at first flocked to the opera-house in great crowds; but when the novelty had worn away they began to grumble about the too exorbitant entrance-fee. They wanted popular prices. The audiences began to diminish, and the manager arrived at the brink of ruin.

It would take too much space to narrate in detail all those circumstances which accompanied every new venture, every new experiment, in the operatic line. Every thing possible under the sun has been tried and devised by ingenious managers, in order to cater to the taste of the American public, — fine opera-houses and dingy theatres, fashionable and popular prices, great artists and mediocre ones, German, French, and Italian opera, English and Offenbach opera-bouffe, fine decorations and daubs by house-painters, brilliant costumes and promiscuous clothes borrowed from Chatham-street pawnbrokers, grand orchestras and no orchestras, full chorus and chorus composed of one singer; but all availed little. From the first serious trial, under the manage-

ment of Garcia, up to our time, the history of the opera in America presents the same material features. The faces of the artists and manager have changed; but the routine of the business has not altered. The opera in America vegetates sometimes luxuriantly, and sometimes poorly; but it does not grow in the sense of true growth. The American people on the whole have not yet felt any serious sympathy with the opera. Their frequenting opera-performances is merely a fashionable whim. It often requires little outside excitement to attract them to the opera-house, and just as little cause to keep them away from it. The American opera-manager is continually sitting upon a barrel of gunpowder, which he is anxiously trying to prevent from exploding beneath him. The history of Italian opera in America may, without exaggeration, be summed up in the following manner: At the beginning of a season great blowing of trumpets by the manager and his interested friends; the press generally echoes the managerial key-note, though one or the other may be found to play his own tune; a promising beginning; the manager is on the road to make a fortune in a short time; the unexpected whim of some jealous singer, a favorite with the public, threatens to spread a cloud over the manager's sanguine hopes; the orchestra and chorus strike for higher wages; or some political crisis occurs; or some novelty in a social, commercial, or other direction occupies public curiosity; the public, for one cause or the other, becomes indifferent, and stays away from the opera-house; the press becomes restless, and challenges the manager to reform, or fear the consequences of his shortcomings; the manager thinks it advisable to visit, with his company, other cities, in

order to replenish his exchequer; he finally goes West, and experiences a grand smash-up; the company (except the one "star," who seldom suffers) in small squads succeeds in getting back to New York; general and wholesale abuse of the manager follows; somebody gathers together the broken-up opera fragments, and manages in a short time to run somebody else in debt; the principal singers leave in disgust for Europe; the chorus and orchestra hold a mass-meeting in some "saloon" on Third Avenue, in order to devise means for getting their pay, and swear never to be entrapped again by those unscrupulous managers. Sometimes the company goes to Mexico to be robbed by banditti, or visits Havana to catch the yellow-fever. This, until a recent period, has been the inevitable fate of Italian opera-managers in America (of honest ones, at least), and will probably be at least partially their fate for some time to come.

Now let us follow the opera on its American pilgrimage.

Between the time of Garcia's opera venture and that of Montressor in 1832, there was "skirmishing all along the line." Malibran, who did not follow her father to Mexico, appeared at the Bowery Theatre in English operas, such as "The Devil's Bridge," "Love in a Village," etc. In 1828 Mme. Feron, with Angrisani and other singers living idly in New York, gave a few opera-performances in the Bowery. A French company gave vaudevilles and comic operas. Mrs. Austin, an English singer who came to New York in 1829, also appeared in English operas.

"Although the good people in this city [says the "Euterpeiad,"] and in the United States appear to know but little about

it, they have in reality among them the second woman in the world in English opera. She has a full soprano voice, of great compass and flexibility; but its most distinguishing attribute is its quality. No division, no break, is perceptible throughout its range."

She appeared at the Park Theatre principally in Arne's "Artaxerxes," in Boieldieu's "Caliph of Bagdad," in Rossini's "Cinderella" and "Barbiere," and in "Rokeby, or a Tale of the Civil Wars," an adaptation by Mr. Berkeley, who was then in America. Signor Da Ponte wrote, for the appearance of his niece, "L'Ape musicale" ("the musical bee"), the music adapted from Rossini. Signora Da Ponte, a third-rate singer, appeared in some other operas in company with Miss George and Mrs. Austin. Among the operas (translated and adapted) and English operettas that were given during this time were "Der Freyschütz," "Marriage of Figaro," "Clari," "Abou Hassan," "Lionel and Clarissa," "Castle of Andalusia," "No Song, no Supper," "Dido;" the music adapted from Rossini by Horn, who, about this time, came to New York, and did afterwards a good deal of such adaptations for the different succeeding English companies. Boieldieu's "Jean de Paris" was put on the stage (Sept. 28, 1827) with Signora Malibran, who then took her farewell benefit, and made her final appearance on the American stage.

"A selection of music followed [says Ireland [1]], and, when the programme had been completed, the signorina came forward and seated herself at her harp, but, seemingly overcome with emotion, again rose; and Mr. Etienne, the pianist, took up the prelude to a farewell song, written for the occasion, which, on regaining her composure, she sang in a most touching and effective manner."

[1] Work quoted.

Shortly after this performance she left for Paris, France.[1]

On Oct. 9, the same year, Weber's "Oberon" was produced for the first time in America; and, later, Boieldieu's "Caliph of Bagdad." In the beginning of 1831 "Cinderella" was put on the stage by an English troupe, with Mrs. Austin; however, not with Rossini's original music, as composed for "Cenerentola," but arranged from several of the composer's operas. In May, 1831, Boieldieu's "Dame Blanche" was produced at the Park Theatre, and proved a great success. On March 17, 1832, Mozart's opera, "Die Zauberflöte," was given for the first time, but of course the music had to be adapted. Mr. Horn, who seems to have been a prolific adapter, "did the job." A month later Auber's "Fra Diavolo" was produced, also arranged.

We may gather from the following extract from a New-York paper at this time that there did not exist much illusion among the intelligent part of the people regarding the permanent establishment of opera on the New-York stage. Speaking of the inequality of the patronage bestowed upon the lyrical drama in the city our critic justly remarks, —

"The fact is, our national character is so strongly marked with the love of novelty and singularity, that, like the men of Athens, we are perpetually in search of something *new*. On the Continent of Europe the most enthusiastic audiences are musical; for tuition in music must precede full enjoyment. That taste which is founded upon knowledge and science never forsakes its posses-

[1] Fétis, saying that she left New York in August, is mistaken. Neither, according to the above date of her last appearance in New York, was it possible for her to arrive in Paris in September, as Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians has it. See article "Malibran," in Fétis's Bibliographie Universelle des Musiciens.

sor, but rather, on the other hand, is continually adding to his sources of enjoyment by new discoveries made, and new ideas imparted. Whether the regular opera is to be maintained here, or carried back again to Europe, will be probably determined in the next six months. If the English opera *does not succeed*, the Italian *cannot*, possessed, as the former is, of all the familiar avenues of the mind and the passions of an audience speaking the English tongue. Should the English opera now be forced from the cisatlantic shores, one thing is certain, — the attempt could not be rationally revived before 1930; viz., translated into words, *a century hence*." [1]

Our prophet does not seem to have been far from a true one.

I will now give some extracts from a correspondence to the London "Harmonicon," regarding the state of music in America anterior to 1830,[2] —

"New York, although not a seat of government, is, nevertheless, the London of the United States. The great influx of foreigners, its extensive commerce and consequent wealth, give it a decided superiority over every other town. It is in New York, therefore, that the drama in all its branches flourishes most. . . . Incledon (late) and Philipps of Dublin were the two first vocalists who visited New York. They had the advantage of being the first artists in that branch who were heard in America, and consequently reaped an abundant harvest; but they had the disadvantage of meeting difficulties in getting up operas, almost insuperable from the want of musicians and the utter ignorance of music throughout the country. Philipps pleased most; and the addition of Moore's melodies, which he first introduced on the stage, decided the business. Incledon [3] played his usual line of character, — was successful with his rough sea-songs, but, in attempting to introduce the 'Beggar's Opera,' was literally pelted off the stage. Since that period musicians began to emigrate from Europe. Mr. Paerman

[1] "Euterpeiad"

[2] Probably written by Mr. Berkeley, the English gentleman who managed Mrs. Austin's affairs in America.

[3] See p. 150.

paid a short visit, and was followed by Garcia and his family, with a complete operatic company of Italians. With incredible trouble the latter collected a tolerable band,[1] and organized a chorus, chiefly of English mechanics settled in this country, who were accustomed to serve in choirs, and could read music. But the opera was not supported, and failed. Nor did Garcia's talented daughter (now Madame Malibran) cause that sensation which her abilities had a right to create, until a few months previous to her quitting the country, when she appeared in English opera with great *éclat.* Mrs. Knight was the first English lady of talent who crossed the Atlantic.[2] . . . She created a great effect in ballad-singing. She was closely followed by Miss George (a pupil of the late Mr. Loder), by Mr. Horn, Mr. Paerman, and Mrs. Austin. An opposition having arisen by the erection of a second theatre the managers of the Park Theatre engaged the three latter artists, and brought a succession of operas at great expense. . . . The singing of Horn and Mrs. Austin as Macheath and Polly also reconciled the public to the 'Beggar's Opera.' Mrs. Austin is now the prima-donna of the Anglo-American stage. A translation of Boieldieu's 'Caliph of Bagdad' has lately been performed with great success, and is the first opera that ever succeeded in America without having previously the London stamp on it."

The following announcement seems to countenance the supposition, that at this epoch "musical taste was being created and established" in New York.[3] The proprietors of the "Euterpeiad," in the number of July 1, say, —

"PRIZE OPERA.

"In order to inspire genius and encourage talent the proprietors of this work offer a premium of $500 for the best opera; the music as well as the words to be original, and to contain three acts, an overture, and a variety of songs, duets, trios, choruses, etc., with instrumental accompaniments. The opera must be forwarded to the proprietors before the 1st of January, 1831. Arrangements will be made to have it brought out at once at one of the theatres

[1] See p. 186. [2] Not quite right. See chapter on English opera.

[3] There seems to be absolutely nothing new under the American sun, — and this is a new country.

in this city. The premium shall be awarded by a committee of seven gentlemen, to be hereafter nominated for that purpose; and, that no partiality or personal predilection may influence the decision (they already knew how things will happen at these *impartial* prize distributions), every piece offered for the prize must be accompanied by a sealed paper containing the name and residence of the author, none of which seals will be broken except that belonging to its successful piece."

Whether "genius was inspired" by this tempting offer I have not been able to find out. It has, however, up to this day vainly tried to inspire itself by such tangible means. A German musician who visited New York about this time expressed his estimate of musical affairs in the American metroplis in the following letter as published by the "Cæcilia," a musical journal at Mayence, Germany. The letter is dated July 27, 1828. I translate it here: —

"The reason for my writing only now, though I already arrived on the 3d of June, is, that I wished to have something definite to report regarding myself as well as the musical situation here.

"I was engaged at the Lafayette Theatre, and have . . . [the rest of the sentence is missing]. I shall immediately go to Boston, which is said to be a very musical city.

"Here the musical situation is the following: New York has four theatres, — Park Theatre, Bowery Theatre, Lafayette Theatre, and Chatham Theatre. Dramas, comedies, and spectacle pieces, also the Wolf's den scene from 'Der Freyschütz,' but without singing, as melodrama and small operettas are given. The performance of a whole opera is not to be thought of. However, they have no sufficient orchestra to do it. The orchestras are very bad indeed, as bad as it is possible to imagine, and incomplete. Sometimes they have two clarinets, which is a great deal; sometimes there is only one first instrument. Of bassoons, oboes, trumpets, and kettledrums, one never sees a sight.[1] However, once in a while a first

[1] Here our correspondent must have been mistaken. A bassoon, trumpets, and kettledrums were used in the orchestra of the first performances of Italian opera. See p. 186.

bassoon is employed. Oboes are totally unknown in this country. Only one oboist exists in North America, and he is said to live in Baltimore.

"In spite of this incompleteness they play symphonies by Haydn, and grand overtures; and, if a gap occurs, they think 'this is only of passing importance,' provided it rattles away again afterwards.

"One is sure to find a trombone in every one of their orchestras. This instrument is used in order to increase the power of the band. It never plays an independent part, but doubles the violoncello part; and, if the player happens to be good, he then occasionally plays a passage with the violin. This instrument and the double-bass are paid best. They sometimes receive from sixteen to seventeen dollars per week. The other instruments receive generally ten dollars per week, the better ones twelve dollars; and the best price paid to the first clarinet is fifteen dollars, because this instrument is considered nearest in importance to the trombone and double-bass.

"It is a self-understood custom, that the leader, with his violin, takes part in every solo. Hence one never hears a solo played alone by one person. This is probably done in order to get a fuller sound.

"Performances take place six times a week in these theatres. Sunday is a day of rest. The performances commence at half-past seven, and last until twelve, sometimes till one. Rope-dancers, or one who is a good clown, — even if he be able to execute only tolerably well a few jumps that resemble a dance, and can make many grotesque grimaces, — or one who plays (all by himself) on the barrel-organ, cymbals, big-drum, Turkish pavilion, — these are the men that help the manager to fill the treasury, and these people earn enormous sums.

"Such is the situation in music here as far as I have been able to study it during my short stay. I shall now go to Boston to see whether it is better there. I doubt it, however. Regarding it in a pecuniary sense the musician who is capable of giving piano or guitar lessons, beside his regular engagement, will find it very lucrative. He will be able to accumulate a small fortune within a short time, but only as teacher on these two instruments. One does not find lessons given on any other ones. Good teachers

receive one dollar per lesson; others, eighteen dollars for twenty-four lessons.

"Living is not very expensive here. Young musicians, even of mediocre talent, who are scarcely able to make a living in Germany, can do well here, and are sure, if they are saving, to make their fortune. They will be considered artists of the first rank here. But it is necessary to know English in order to be able to teach.[1]

"The next time something about Boston."

I am inclined to think that the above letter was written by Schott, the clarinetist, whom we shall meet playing solos at different concerts about this time. He went from New York to Boston, from whence he came back to New York, having probably found Boston less musical than New York. His noticing the importance of the clarinet in the orchestra gives reason for this belief. He was very likely a relation of the house Schott at Mayence, the publishers of the "Cæcilia."

Now let us return to operatic affairs.

In 1832 a regularly equipped Italian opera re-appeared in New York, under the management of the tenor singer *Montressor.* Signora Pedrotti, Signora Montressor, Fornasari, Corsetti, besides several good secondary singers, belonged to this company, which opened on the 6th of October that year with "Cenerentola" at the Richmond Hill Theatre. Signor Da Ponte was very active in the organization of this company.

The operas performed during this season were — besides "Cenerentola" — "L'Italiana in Algieri," Bellini's "Il Pirata," and Mercadante's "Elisa e Claudio," the

[1] This advice to young German musicians, no doubt, induced many to immigrate to America. From this time on, they were to be found more and more numerous in New York.

most admired work. Montressor gave a season of thirty-five nights. The receipts were $25,603. As a matter of course Montressor went down, and his company was dispersed.

The orchestra, under the directorship of Signor Bagioli, was pronounced the best that had yet been brought together in New York. Rapetti was the leader. The violinists were Schmidt, Crose, Comi, Mayers, and Dumasant; violas, Abel and Lannay; the distinguished Casolani was the contra-bassist; Hutet played the violoncello; Flotter, the flute; and for the first time two oboes, Paggi and Conti, made their appearance in an American orchestra; Guillaud and Pentland were the clarinetists; Gardenghi, bassoon; Nidds and Munson, horns; Cioffi, trombone; and Nelson played the trumpet. Most of these musicians were engaged in Europe for the new opera season, and, after the collapse of the enterprise, settled in New York.

In September, 1833, English opera made its entrance again at the Park Theatre, with Mr. and Mrs. Wood as the principal singers. They appeared in "Cinderella," "The Barber of Seville," "The Marriage of Figaro," "La Somnambula," and a piece called "The Maid of Judah." After the Woods another English company, composed of rather mediocre singers, gave opera-performances at the Park Theatre. They gave among others Bishop's opera, "Native Land."

Of these performances the "American Musical Journal" says, —

"The manager of the Park Theatre has done much in introducing new music to the notice of our citizens, for which he deserves the thanks of every musical amateur. The opera 'Der Freyschütz,' independently of its scenery, incantation, etc., created a great sensa-

tion from the novelty and excellency of its music, and was nightly crowded; and it still continues to draw good houses whenever performers of talent sustain the characters. The same may be said of 'Artaxerxes,' 'Masaniello,' 'John of Paris,' and several other pieces; and there is the opera of 'Cinderella,' which contains such an excellent selection of music that it has continued to draw full houses for upwards of seventy nights. Last spring, when 'Robert the Devil' (adapted and arranged) was produced with Mr. and Mrs. Wood, the house was crowded nightly."

A new and handsome opera-house was then built at the corner of Church and Leonard Streets, chiefly through the personal exertions of Signor Da Ponte, who succeeded in persuading several New-York gentlemen to form an association for that purpose. The house was opened on the 18th of November, 1833.

This new opera-house was a large and inwardly elegant establishment, exclusively for operatic performances. The auditorium was different in arrangement from any hitherto seen in America. The second tier was composed entirely of private-boxes, hung with curtains of crimson silk; and the first tier communicated with the balcony and pit, thus making the first advance toward the long-desired privilege of ladies occupying that portion of the house. The whole interior was pronounced magnificent, and the scenery and curtains were beautiful beyond all precedent. The ground of the box-fronts was white, with emblematical medallions and octagonal panels of crimson, blue, and gold. The dome was painted with representations of the Muses. The sofas and pit-seats were covered with blue damask, and the floors were all carpeted. This handsome building was destroyed by fire, Sept. 23, 1839.[1]

This new Italian company was under the management

[1] Ireland, work quoted.

of Signors Rivafinoli and Da Ponte. Rivafinoli is probably the same gentleman whom Da Ponte mentions in his "Memorie," [1] and with whom he had some transactions regarding Italian books. The principal singers of this new company were Signora Clementina Fanti, first soprano; Rosina Fanti, second soprano; Louisa Bordogni, mezzo-soprano; Schneider-Maroncelli, contralto; Signors Fabi and Raviglio, *tenori;* De Rosa and Porto, *bassi.* The season lasted six months. The operas given were "La Gazza Ladra," "Il Barbiere," "La Donna del Lago," "Il Turco in Italia," "Cenerentola," "Matilda di Shabran," all by Rossini; "Gli Arabi nelli Gallie," by Pacini; "Il Matrimonio Segreto," by Cimarosa; and "La Casa da Vendere," by Salvioni, the music-director of the company. Several of these operas were given with such splendid scenery, dresses, and decorations, etc., as to exceed any thing of a like nature previously seen in the city. But this third attempt at Italian opera again proved abortive. A writer of this time thought that —

"It is perhaps an unfortunate circumstance for the success of Italian opera in this city, that, at its first introduction, it broke upon us at once in nearly all its perfection. The first company contained some of the finest singers that Europe produced, artists who had secured the applauses of the most fashionable audiences of Europe."

After Rivafinoli's collapse a new company was organized under the management of Porto and Sacchi. The former was one of the singers, and the latter the treasurer, of the Rivafinoli company. The new company consisted of Signora Fanti, Rosina Fanti, Miss Julia Wheatly (daughter of the manager of the Park Theatre), Signori Fabi, Porto, Monterasi, and Ferrero.

[1] Vol. iii. p. 25.

This company was not a strong one. The orchestra was considered the redeeming feature of this establishment. It consisted of twenty-five musicians, "many of whom would do honor to any theatre in Europe, and all of whom were men of respectable standing in the profession." Boucher, the principal violoncellist, was the leader of the orchestra, which was composed of the following instruments: seven violins, two violas, two celli, two contrabassi, two flutes, one flute for the oboe, two clarinetti, one bassoon, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, kettledrum, and harp; oboes are missing.

The company opened on the 18th of November with Rossini's "Gazza Ladra," and brought out during the season "Il Barbiere," "Donna del Lago," Cimarosa's "Il Matrimonio Segreto," Pacini's "Gli Arabi nelle Gallie," Rossini's "Mathilde di Shabran," and "Cenerentola." On the 10th of November, 1834, the opera-house was re-opened for a second season with Bellini's "La Straniera." Rossini's "Eduardo e Cristina," "L'Inganno Felice," "L' Assedio di Corinto," "Mosè in Egitto," were successively brought out when the sudden flight of Signora Fanti put a stop to this company's performances.

The following censure, directed against the proprietors of the new opera-house, reads as if written to-day against the proprietor of the Academy of Music. It seems somebody was blamed for the failure of the Italian opera.

"An opinion prevails pretty generally among opera-goers that the proprietors of this house are retarding the very object for which they built it by their injudicious retaining the whole second row of boxes. It is said that this arrangement operates injuri-

ously in several ways, and that it would be much more advantageous to the managers to pay a rent fully equal to the interest of the capital invested on the building."

Signor Rivafinoli, at the close of his opera season, published in the New-York papers the following statement of the receipts and expenditure of his operatic enterprise. It is an instructive document.

EXPENSES.

Paid singers, orchestra, chorus-singers, and others engaged by regular agreements, for eight months from Nov. 1, 1833	$36,304 35
Other chorus-singers and performers in the orchestra engaged per month	3,330 24
Cashier, police-attendants, box-keepers, gas-men, hair-dressers, tailors, servants, etc.	5,470 80
Artists, their share of benefits	1,767 14
Travelling expenses for fourteen individuals from Paris and six from Italy, together with travelling expenses from New York to Philadelphia and back again	5,541 04
Gas, coal, oil, and candles	2,574 50
Lighting, carpenters, box-keepers, police-attendants, and rent for theatre at Philadelphia	1,633 37
Coach-hire, printing and posting bills in New York and Philadelphia	1,345 00
Commission to the agent in New York and Italy	975 50
Supernumeraries, carpenters, and women for cleaning the theatre	1,192 00
Painter, ropes, cloth for scenery, planks, machinist	1,041 96
Property in New York and Paris	520 00
Dresses in Paris and New York	7,010 15
Music-paper in Italy, France, and New York, and for copying	1,356 25
House-furniture, house-expenses, petty cash, etc	1,516 14
	$71,578 14
Sums still due by the manager to different singers, chorus-singers, orchestra, and other individuals	9,476 54
Total expenses for eight months	$81.054 98

RECEIPTS.

Subscriptions for the first 40 representations, commencing the 18th Nov. 1833	$8,410 00
Subscriptions for the second 19 representations, commencing Feb. 21, 1834	1,953 00
Subscription in Philadelphia for 15 representations, commencing 4th April	1,282 00
Cash received at the door for 40 representations in New York	15,987 00
Cash received at the door for 19 representations in New York	4,764 50
Cash received at the door for 15 representations in Philadelphia	3,861 00
Cash received at the door for 12 concerts, 1 oratorio, 1 mass	3,268 75
Cash received at the door for 12 benefits	10,407 50
Cash received at the door for manager's benefits	1,026 50
Rent for the bars	758 64
	$51,780 89
Deficit	$29,275 09

The manager paid no rent in cash for the house: but the proprietors reserved to themselves the exclusive use of twenty boxes in the second tier, with the privilege of a hundred and sixteen free tickets for each night, all transferable; which tickets, calculated at the same rate as the sofa-seats were the previous season, make sixty-eight representations, a sum equal to $15,776. Under such circumstances there was no chance for a manager. According to the figures above, the company was not well appreciated in Philadelphia.

With the above failures Italian-opera affairs in New-York City were at a complete standstill until the opening of Signor Palmo's new opera-house. The above handsome one proved to be a too expensive institution.

However, in spite of the signal failure to gain a permanent foothold for the opera in America, the eyes of European singers and instrumentalists began to be directed towards the new country, where, it was thought, a fortune could be made within a short time.

In 1837 Mme. Caradori-Allan came, and as oratorio, opera, and concert singer, proved a very valuable acquisition in the interest of true musical development. She sang in New York, in Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities of the States. In 1838, with the assistance of resident New-York singers, such as the English basso, Brough, Richings, and others, she gave operas at the Park Theatre. Balfe's "Siege of Rochelle," "La Somnambula," "Cinderella," "The Barber of Seville," "The Elixir of Love," were given.

The orchestra at the Park Theatre consisted then of twenty-one musicians; viz., six violins, two violas, two cellos, two double-basses, one flute, one flute for oboe-part, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, one trumpet, one trombone, and drums. The chorus comprised seventeen persons.

In the same year the Seguin combination — comprising Miss Shireff, Mr. Wilson, Mrs. Seguin, etc. — gave operatic performances at the National Theatre. They opened with Rooke's opera, "Amelie, or the Love Test," which was performed for twelve consecutive nights before crowded houses. The distinguished singer De Begnis, who made New York his permanent residence, also appeared in opera with this company. In 1839 another English company — Miss Inverarity, Miss Poole, Mr. Manvers, Mr. Giubilei, and Mr. Marty — arranged operatic performances. On Sept. 9 they performed, for the first time in America, Beethoven's

"Fidelio;" it was played fourteen consecutive nights. This company gave, besides "Fidelio," "La Cenerentola," La Gazza Ladra," "La Somnambula," "Fra Diavolo," "Elisire d'Amore," and Adam's "Postillon de Lonjumeau," all in English. But this company was not successful for any length of time. It finally broke up, and some of its members sung in New York and Boston in oratorios and concerts. In 1840 the Woods re-appeared, and opened a new season with "La Sonnambula;" "Fidelio," as well as the "Beggar's Opera" (two opposite operatic poles), were revived by them. The once eminent English singer and composer of operettas, Braham, also came over at this time, and gave concerts in Niblo's before fashionable audiences. He afterwards appeared in English opera at the Park, but the engagement was not a successful one. He sang in "The Siege of Belgrade," "The Devil's Bridge," "The Waterman," and "The Cabinet." Such, and those given in flying visits by the New-Orleans opera-companies, were the opera-performances at this period in New York. They represent all that then was done in the operatic field in the United States, except in the Southern capital, New Orleans, of which I shall speak in another chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ORATORIO AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN NEW YORK.

About 1830 the principal New-York musical societies were the *Musical Fund*, the *Euterpean Society*, and the *Sacred-Music Society*. The Musical Fund, the successor of the Philharmonic Society, which I have already mentioned, organized about 1828, was composed of professional and amateur gentlemen, and gave monthly rehearsals for "the display of the glee and solo talent" of the city. These monthly exercises were private.

The *Euterpean Society*, established about 1799, was composed of instrumental performers, and the oldest society in the city, having existed for nearly thirty years. This society met every Friday evening during the summer months, and gave one concert a year.[1]

The *Sacred-Music Society* was started about the same time as the above "Choral Society," which seems to have been swallowed up by the "Sacred-Music Society," of which I shall give the history in another place.

Here is the programme of the concert given by the Musical Fund Society at the City Hall, May 10, 1830, — "there being present from a thousand to twelve hundred persons."

[1] Summer cannot have been so warm at that time in New York as now. Musical societies at present take a long vacation during the summer months.

FIRST PART.

Overture: "Il Flauto Magico" . . . . . *Mozart.*
Aria: . . . . . *Rossini.*
Signor ANGRISANI.
Ballad: "Love's Ritornello" . . . . . *J. Cooke.*
Mrs. KNIGHT.
Grand Duo: "Se la vita t'e cara."
Signora DA PONTE and Signor ANGRISANI.
Grand variations: Piano-forte on the favorite air "Ma Fanchette est charmante". . . . . *Hertz (Herz).*
Miss STERLING.
Aria: "Don Bartolo" . . . . . *Rossini.*
Signor ROSICH.

SECOND PART.

Grand overture to Zaire . . . . . *Winter.*
Duo Buffo: "Ai Capricci delle sorte . . . . *Rossini.*
Mrs. KNIGHT and Signor ROSICH.
Concerto: trumpet, Mr. NORTON, in which he will introduce an Echo, Andante; "Star-Spangled Banner;" Rondo, "British Grenadier."
Grand scena: À ciel offerite . . . . . *Vaccaj.*
Signora DA PONTE.
Song: "Hark! hark! 'tis the Echo" . . . . *Weber.*
Mrs. KNIGHT.
Concerto: clarinetto, Mr. SCHOTT, in which he will introduce a popular melody.
Aria Buffa: "The Dream of Don Magnifico" . . *Rossini.*
Signor ROSICH.

This was, no doubt, considered a formidable programme. The singers of course pleased all. The trumpet-playing of Mr. Norton "was a splendid affair." Mr. Schott,[1] lately from Boston, "astonished all. The *chalumeau* notes were soft and mellow, with none of

[1] Probably the writer of the German letter given on p. 199.

those goose-imitating and hoarse sounds, to which we are too often obliged to listen. Mr. Schott is, undoubtedly, the first clarinet player in the country." But the critique on Miss Sterling's piano-forte performance caps the climax of musical criticism: it is absolutely typical in its exaggerated bombastic expression.

"Of Miss Sterling we find it difficult to speak in terms adequate to our sense of her finish as a pianist. The difficult variations were selected for the display of her piano talents, and the selection was judicious. The keys of her piano seemed gifted with vocal power, which addressed themselves to the inmost feelings of the audience in tones of stirring excitement or of melting passion, of solemn grandeur or hurried breathlessness, at the will of their mistress, who, unlike the great mass of performers, was — while her quick eye was keenly observant of the language of her note-book — listening with intensity to the articulation of her instrument, her practised fingers meantime flying from key to key with magic celerity and unfaltering accuracy. We were specially pleased with her double run on the chromatic scale, in which the semi-tones were heard with perfect distinctness. Her skipping passages excited universal admiration, and we almost imagined the fingers of some of the fair auditory were tingling with emulation."

This is, indeed, original. In June Miss Sterling gave a concert, in which, among others, the Misses Gillingham, two sisters, appeared as singers; which event gave the "Courier and Enquirer" an opportunity for the following remarks: —

"Our fair country-women, the Misses Gillingham, have all the *materiale* of accomplished singers. . . . If under judicious control and management of a perfect master, practice will place them on equal terms with any foreign exotic attracted to our shores. We have now the prospect of having a considerable musical taste created and permanently established."

Here is a remarkable programme of a concert, still called oratorio, which took place at St. Paul's Church, Feb. 24, 1831. The orchestra played the Introduction to Beethoven's "Mount of Olives," and Gluck's overture to "Iphigenia." That honest musician, U. C. Hill, played a solo for the violin by Corelli; the clarinettist, Schott, played two solos on the corno basetto. And among the vocal pieces there were Handel's "Farewell, ye Limpid Streams," "Hush, ye Pretty Warbling Choirs," "I know that my Redeemer liveth," Haydn's "Rolling in Foaming Billows," Handel's chorus "The Horse and the Rider," and Cianchettini's "Domine Labio."

In the face of such a programme, at so early an epoch of American musical culture, we are scarcely justified in speaking of our present progress as great in the matter of taste. It is only so far progress in that a larger number of people are won over to listen to good music. In 1834 the "American Musical Journal" thinks itself justified in making the following remarks on the musical situation in New-York City: —

"To an attentive observer of musical events in New York there are many circumstances indicative of the existence of a very general taste for music amongst our people. By 'taste' we mean not merely a fondness for such melodies as they have been accustomed to, which exists in a great degree amongst our people, but an appreciation of that class of music confessedly good.

"For evidence of this taste we refer to the liberal patronage bestowed upon good music produced in the theatre, oratorios, and concerts.

"Music is cultivated privately to a great extent. Almost all parents consider it a necessary accomplishment for their children. Every house of respectability has its piano, guitar, or harp; and music is our chief source of amusement at our social meet-

ings. The amateurs of violin, flute, and other instruments are numerous, and many of them have attained considerable proficiency.

"But the increase of professional men, of new musical publications, of the manufacture of musical instruments, particularly the piano-forte, and the rapid extension of every branch connected with music, are all evidences of the extent of its cultivation, and proofs of the strong passion entertained for it by our countrymen."

But in view of the following remarks, the above will, on the whole, seem to be too favorably colored, regarding musical taste in New York at that time. A Mr. Young played at the Park Theatre a concerto on the keyed serpent; and, though the critic (our authority in this case) thinks that "the serpent is the last instrument in the world, we wish to hear figuring in a concerto within doors," yet Mr. Young was found to play really beautifully. Our source then goes on to say that—

"The uncommon partiality our citizens manifest for the noisy part of the orchestra has been lately much commented on by strangers. The trumpet and trombone occupy, in our concerts, the *posts of honor*. True it is, Mr. Norton and Mr. Gambati are excellent performers; but we hear them in concerts too often. In England they have Harper, a first-rate trumpet; and Germany has Schmidt, the best trombone that ever existed. This gentleman visited England and was heard occasionally; but at Niblo's Garden we will undertake to say that more trumpet and trombone concertos were played last season than have been heard in England and Germany for two years. If Mr. Young adds himself to this triumvirate next season, we may fairly expect New York *will be blown away*."

This predilection for brass instruments, and especially the successful usurper of the place of the more manly trumpet (the cornet), is still entertained by a great ma-

jority of our contemporary American musical amateurs. Even the following incidents, which took place in summer, 1834, could be cited as having lately taken place at Manhattan or Brighton Beach. The above two trumpet-players, Gambati and Norton, had "a trumpet match" at Niblo's. Norton seems to have been the victor. To console Gambati a vase was presented to him by his admirers and friends.[1] In January Mr. Gambati gave a farewell concert; and on this occasion "a splendid vase, which was presented to Mr. Gambati by some of his friends, after the trumpet match at Niblo's last summer, was exhibited between the parts. For what purpose this was done, unless as a piece of humbug, we are at a loss to conjecture, as it was publicly exhibited previously at Mr. Atwill's store in Broadway, and at Niblo's."

"Tout comme chez nous."

Up to about 1842 the "Euterpean," the "Musical Fund," and "Sacred-Music Society" remained the principal societies of New-York City. The first, mainly composed of amateurs, does not seem to have enjoyed great favor with its yearly concert on the part of the musical critics. The "Musical Fund," composed of professional musicians, had at its yearly concert, given in December, 1836, a band composed of the following instruments: thirteen violins, two violas, three celli, two double-basses, two flutes, four clarinets (two played the oboe parts), two bassoons, four horns, one trumpet, three trombones, kettledrums, cymbals; total, thirty-eight musicians. The work for the full band consisted of the

[1] This Norton-Gambati "trumpet match" caused such a degree of excitement among the friends of the two musicians, that, after the celebrated tournament was over, a free fight was indulged in by the Nortonists and Gambatiists of the orchestral band.

overtures to "Semiramide" and "William Tell." Mr. Boucher was the leader. The programme names, besides numerous Italian arias, a solo for the flute, one for the violoncello, and one for the inevitable trombone. On the whole the programmes of public performances were composed of works selected from Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Gluck, Beethoven, Rossini, Weber. Parts of Beethoven's "Mount of Olives" seem to have been often sung. Gluck's overture to "Iphigenia" was apparently a favorite with the orchestra. Beethoven's "Eroica" figures on a programme as arranged for septet.

The desire for the acquirement of a thorough musical understanding, in order to foster a taste for the best works, was, on the whole, a genuine one. We shall see all along through our narrative that, though the necessary practical knowledge was for a long while wanting, yet the struggle for mastery of the great difficulties of the admired works was not given up; although public exhibitions were, time and time again, marred, either by insufficient rehearsing, or by a want of practical musical skill, on the part of the performers. The following remarks on this subject, by the editor of the "American Musical Journal" will show with what perseverance and hope the then musically enlightened American looked upon the musical future of his country.[1] From the foreigner he borrowed his teachers, his solo-singers, his instrumental performers. To become the equal of the indispensable foreigner was his greatest endeavor, and a worthy one.

"No public institution has yet been established in our country on the plan of the schools of Italy and Germany, the *conservatorio*

[1] This shows that the theories of our present *nativist* prophets were anticipated some years ago.

of France, and the academies of other of the European kingdoms, for the purpose of instructing pupils in every branch of the musical art by competent teachers; and the course of events in other countries, as well as a careful view of the whole subject, leads us irresistibly to the conclusion, that, until we have institutions similar to those in Europe for the thorough education of the native professional musician, we cannot expect to make such advances in the art as to acquire any distinctive or national rank, or have any music that can with propriety be called our own. Our musical bodies have almost exclusively been instituted for the acquirement of practical skill on the part of the members, and for public performances of musical compositions; and in the fulfilment of these objects they undoubtedly have a very important and beneficial influence on the progress of music in their immediate vicinity.

"These institutions are important in several points of view; but the mode in which they operate most influentially is by their concerts rendering a large number of persons familiar with good compositions, performed in a superior manner. The pleasure afforded by these performances, and the exhibition of skill there witnessed, excite admiration for the art, and cause increased attention to its cultivation. They also serve to elicit the abilities of our people by the estimation in which individual talent is held, enkindling a spirit of emulation, and an endeavor to arrive at similar excellence. . . It is to them also we must look for whatever inductions our people in a collective point of view, yet exhibit of aptitude for music and the skill in its performance. If we go to the theatre or to the opera, we find nearly all the performers foreigners; if to an oratorio or sacred concert, there at least we find one department, *the chorus*, to consist almost entirely of our own people: and the good voices and practical skill which they exhibit are in the highest degree flattering to our national feelings, and afford an indication of the success that may reasonably be expected to attend our pursuit of this art when we possess the advantages for improvement enjoyed by others."

In the summing up the work, influence, and activity of the then principal musical societies in New York, our critic says that the "Musical Fund, after a short year or two, was found not to fulfil its duties towards

its friends." In fine, the "Musical Fund is not effecting any one object for which it was established." He is, on the whole, not better satisfied with the work done by the "Euterpean."

This society was considered as perhaps the oldest musical society in the United States. It was regarded as the lineal descendant of the old "Apollo." The Euterpean had already enjoyed an existence of nearly forty years. The practice of instrumental music was this society's aim; but in a musical sense it did not seem to have much influence outside of its own circle.

"This society [says a writer of that time], from its long standing, the respectability of its officers, and the individual talent of its members, might possess the most extensive influence in the musical community. It has in its possession funds, and the largest library of instrumental music in the country; and yet, with all these advantages on its side, what has the Euterpean done, or what does it do? It can be summed up in a few words. A few of its members meet every Friday evening, and play overtures and symphonies; and every year they give an indifferent concert and a ball, the last of which is the chief attraction. Now, we ask the Euterpean, if, like a horse in a mill, they are forever to pursue this eternal round?"

After a sound lecture given to the members of this society for their want of energy in the management, and their indifference with regard to musical matters, our critic goes on to say, —

"We assure the members of this society, that these remarks are not made with any other feeling than that of a desire on *our* part to see the Euterpean make use of the means in its possession for the advancement of its own fame and that of the city. We want to see it do for instrumental music what the New-York Sacred-Music Society is doing for choral. We wish to see it become the Philharmonic of this London [1] of America, and to

[1] English institutions have repeatedly served as models to America.

point it out to the stranger and the foreigner as an institution of which we have reason to be proud as the energetic cultivator of instrumental music in New York."

Thus the Euterpean may be considered in a certain degree as the fore-runner of the present renowned New-York Philharmonic Society. Here is a programme of its annual concert that took place at the City Hall, June 30, 1839.

Overture: "Zampa" . . . . . *Herold.*
New ballad . . . . . *Horn.*
Mrs. HORN.

Andante and variations. Clarinet . . . . *Baermann.*
Mr. CHRISTIAN.

Northern refrain . . . . . *Horn.*
Mr. HORN.

"Thema," with variations. Violin . . . . *Mayseder.*
Mr. HILL.

Overture: "Le Philtre" . . . . . *Auber.*
"Casta Diva:" "Norma" . . . . . *Bellini.*
Mrs. HORN.

Introduction, air, and variations. Flute . . . *Boehm.*
Mr. DOWNE.

"Mad Tom of Bedlam" . . . . . *Purcell.*
Mr. HORN.

Solo. Oboe[1] . . . . . *Ribas.*
Mr. RIBAS.

Duetto from "Armide" . . . . . *Rossini.*
Mr. and Mrs. HORN.

Fantaisie: "God save the Queen" and "Rule Britannia" . . . . . *Thalberg.*
Mr. SCHARFENBERG.

Finale, Overture: "Bronze Horse" . . . . *Auber.*

[1] It enters the field.

The orchestra was composed of the following instruments: six first violins, five second violins, four tenors, three celli, two contra-basses, four flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, kettledrums, drum, and cymbals.

Here we have a complete symphonic orchestra, with a tolerably good proportion. It was considered the "best orchestra that ever gathered in New York for a performance;" and "it was a rare thing to see in one orchestra *five leaders* such as Rapetti, Hughes, Hill, on the first violins, Boucher, cello, and Sage on the second violin." Most of these musicians were a few years later the moving spirits that founded the New-York Philharmonic Society.

The "New-York Sacred-Music Society" seems to have stood the highest of all at this time in the estimation of musical people. It was instituted in 1823, and devoted its energy principally to the cultivation of oratorio music. The origin of the "New-York Sacred-Music Society" was due to some rather peculiar circumstanccs. As it then often happened in churches the choir of Zion Church, at the corner of Mott and Cross Streets, indulged in a quarrel with the government of this church.

"The church [says the "Musical Journal"], in the commencement of the year 1823, had a numerous and regularly organized choir, known by the name of the 'Zion Church Musical Association,' which had obtained considerable reputation. The choristers of the church applied to the vestry for an increase of salary, or permission to give a concert. The vestry, however, refused to comply with the request. Upon that, the choir drew up and signed a memorial to the vestry, in which they set forth the justice of the claims of the choristers, and requested that they might be granted. This step the vestry chose to look upon as an inter-

ference with their rights and duties, and passed a resolution to that effect. This, with some other previous heart-burnings and bickerings, decided the choir to withdraw from the church in a body. A part of the choir held a meeting, and resolved to found a society for the purpose of continuing the practice of sacred music, and called it 'The New-York Sacred-Music Society.'

"It is somewhat remarkable that two of our most prominent societies should owe their origin, either directly or indirectly, to this church. The late Handel and Haydn Society, it is known, originated from the oratorios that were got up for the purpose of re-building this church, after the destruction of the former edifice by fire."

The following is the programme of the first concert given by this society:—

Arrangements of a Concert of Sacred Music to be given in the Presbyterian Church, in Provost Street, by the New-York Sacred-Music Society on Monday Evening, March 15, 1824, assisted by a Number of Gentlemen and Ladies.

PART I.

Quartette and Chorus: Luther's "Judgment Hymn."
Solo: "Gentle Spirit" . . . . . *Chapple.*
Anthem from the Psalm XL., "I waited patiently."
Bass Solo . . . . . *Chapple.*
Solo: "Eve's Lamentation."
Anthem from Psalm XCIII., "The Lord is King."
Bass solo . . . . . *Chapple.*
Quartette: "Lovely is the face of nature" . . . *Haydn.*
Duetto: "Praise ye the Lord."
Chorus: "O Praise the Lord, Hallelujah" . . . *Miller.*

PART II.

Chorus: "O all ye peoples, clap your hands."
Solo: "In native worth" . . . . . *Haydn.*
Trio: Anthem from Psalm CIII. . . . . *Chapple.*
Solo: "O had I Jubal's lyre."
Trio: "Happy beyond description."
Chorus: "Arise, ye people" (the "Marseillaise"). French Air.
Trio and chorus: "Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing."

The above programme is composed mostly of such pieces as were then practised by church-choirs; viz., anthems and choruses to be found in the psalm-tune collections. Though some of the members of the new society expressed a desire to study a higher class of music, the majority of the choir, however, found the meetings of the society "a pleasant place in which to pass an evening, to see their friends, and hear a little music." Some instrumental performers regularly attended the meetings, say two or three violins, a violoncello, a couple of flutes, and as many clarinets. In this manner the society pursued its work, giving, during the winter, an occasional concert. At one given in May, 1826, one of the features was a band, composed of *twelve* instruments. However, the society continued to increase in numbers.

In the early part of the year 1827 an event took place which had the most important influence upon the future course of the society, and had the effect of at once advancing it to a position to which, in the ordinary course of its progress, it might have taken years to attain. In the winter of 1826–27 the sympathies of the citizens of New York were deeply excited in behalf of the suffering and heroic Greeks. Benefits, in all forms, were resorted to, to give assistance to the struggling nation. The New-York Sacred-Music Society arranged an oratorio for the benefit of the Greeks, to be given on Wednesday, Feb. 28, 1827. The following programme, —

PART I.

Overture	*Jomelli.*
Chorus: "Arise, ye people," "Marsellais" (*sic*) . .	*Hymn.*
Air: "Sound an Alarm"	*Handel.*

Recitative and air: "Comfort ye my people" . . *Handel.*
Air: "My song shall be merry" . . . . . *Kent.*
Grand chorus: "Hallelujah to the Father," "Mount of Olives" . . . . . *Beethoven.*

PART II.

Overture: "Artaxerxes" . . . . . *Arne.*
Chorus: "Awake to sounds of glory" . . . . *Mozart.*
Recitative and air: "Sound the trumpet" . . . *Himmel.*
Air: "Sin not, O King" . . . . . *Handel.*
Song: "Lord, remember David" . . . . . *Handel.*
Recitative and air: "Angels ever bright and fair" . *Handel.*
Grand chorus: "Hallelujah," "Messiah" . . . . *Handel.*

The orchestra consisted of twenty-seven instruments, and the chorus of about sixty persons.

Among the solo artists, one no less distinguished than Signora Malibran assisted.

"During the performance of the song ('Angels ever bright'), says a musical paper of the time, so silent was the audience, that not even a whisper was to be heard. She performed it beautifully, as a matter of course, although the admirers of simplicity of Handel had to regret the introduction of so much ornament. She was 'clad in robes of virgin white; and at the words 'Take, oh take me to your care,' she raised her hands and eyes in an imploring attitude to heaven in so dramatic and touching a manner as to electrify the audience, and to call down a universal outburst of approbation, a very unusual occurrence in a church of this country."

The gross receipts of the above concert were $867, of which $590 were paid into the Greek fund. Besides this immediate advantage the society received a new impulse for the study of a better class of music.

"From this period the history of the progress of the highest species of sacred music in this city is identified with the history of this society. The Handel and Hadyn Society pursued a short, but

brilliant career, and had ceased to be. The Choral, which succeeded that society, was now on the eve of dissolution, and finally left the above society in undisputed possession of the field."[1]

It was not until 1831, however, that the New-York Sacred-Music Society ventured to commence the practice of an entire oratorio. Dnring the interval from 1827 to that period the principal event that calls for any remark was the engagement of U. C. Hill as leader of the society. It was, no doubt, due to the efforts of this energetic and enthusiastic musician, that the rehearsing of Handel's "Messiah" was taken up. This work was performed Nov. 18, 1831, in St. Paul's Chapel, being the first time that an entire oratorio was ever performed in New-York City (only a little more than fifty years ago). The solo singers were Mrs. Austin, Mrs. Singleton, Mr. John Jones, Mr. A. Kyle, Mr. J. Pearson, and Mr. Th. Thornton. The orchestra consisted of thirty-eight instruments, and the chorus of seventy-four voices, all under the direction of U. C. Hill.[2] This performance of the "Messiah" excited great interest. The chapel was completely filled, and the receipts were nine hundred dollars.

The "Messiah" was repeated on the 31st of January, and again on the 2d of February. The society, by means of such good work, became now the favorite society of the city; and its members began to increase. This has always been the case with regard to chorus-societies in New York: when a society was prosperous,

[1] "Musical Journal."

[2] Although on page 131 a performance of the "Messiah" is mentioned as having taken place in Trinity Church, the above may be termed the *first true* performance for the reason that the accompaniments were played by a good-sized orchestra instead of an organ.

members were plentiful; when, on the other hand, through this or that circumstance, the society has experienced reverses, a general stampede among the members has resulted. The bulk of the work has always rested on the shoulders of a small number of faithful ones, who have generally been made the victims of adverse criticism for the shortcomings of others.[1] The greatest drawback to the success of New-York oratorio-societies was the absence of a suitable hall, convenient in every respect for advantageous, commodious arrangement of chorus and orchestra, and pleasant for the audience. The churches that allowed oratorio performances within their walls were ill-fitted for such a purpose; and often the best-prepared performance suffered from such discouraging outward circumstances and surroundings.

The Sacred-Music Society, encouraged by this success, now added to its *répertoire* Haydn's "Te Deum" and "Creation." It now gave yearly oratorio performances, with varying success, both with regard to artistic as well as pecuniary progress.

Here is a statement of the expenses of oratorio performances at this epoch in New-York City. The statement relates to twelve consecutive performances.

Principal vocal performers		$1,923 00
Instrumental		2,372 50
Printing books afterwards, and tickets	$279 33	
Printing and posting large bills	194 34	
Advertising in newspapers	457 91	
		928 58
Refreshments		277 07
Labor, including porterage, door-keepers, etc.		230 17

[1] See also page 281

Sundry incidental expenses, such as hire of instruments, tuning of instruments, carriage hire, carpenter's work, extra light, etc	$393 21
	$6,124 53
Total receipts for twelve performances	$6,814 00
Excess of receipts over expenses	$689 47
Of this sum there was paid to charitable institutions .	388 64
Leaving a net gain to the society of	$300 83

The entrance fee was $1 per person.

The average expense of each performance, without including cost of music, was about $500.

Here is the list of the band employed at these oratorio performances, which took place in 1834: —

Principal vocal performers: Mr. and Mrs. Wood, Mrs. Franklin, Mr. Sheppard, and Mr. Pearson.

Conductor and leader, Mr. Penson.

Director of chorus, Mr. Sage.

Organists: Messrs. Harrison and Lankenau.

Orchestra and chorus, —

Violins	14	Drum	1
Viola	3	Double Drum	1
Celli	4	Treble	47
Double Basses	3	Alto	15
Flutes	3	Tenor	30
Clarinets	4	Bass	43
Bassoons	2		135
Horns	3		
Trumpets	2	Solo singers	9
Trombones	2	Instruments	42
	40	Total	186

The oboe is still missing among the instruments, and its want was keenly felt by musicians. "*Sans* oboes,"

says a writer at this time, "there is not a single piece of music can be rendered perfect." This was, for that time, a large band of chorus singers and orchestral players; and it excited an American musical journal to the following remarks:—

"This orchestra, we venture to assert, was the greatest assemblage of vocal and instrumental talent that has taken place in the United States; and as this was one of our great performances we have concluded to make its numbers a matter of record. It will no doubt appear small, if compared with the grand and imposing assemblages of Europe, where the orchestra amounted to six hundred and twenty-six; but London contains a million and a half of inhabitants, New York only a quarter of a million, or one to six. It is but six or seven years that we were only able to assemble at performances seventy or eighty performers; and, if the same rapid improvement continues for a few years to come that has marked the past, it will not be many years before the city alone can give performances with four or five hundred performers. And when the proximity of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and the attention now bestowed on sacred music in each of these cities, are considered, the time is perhaps not so distant as some imagine when musical festivals will be common, equalling in numbers, and even in talent, those that England is so justly proud of."

At this comparatively early stage of the history of American musical development the English plan of organizing musical festivals was already considered as a model to be imitated at some future time. And this time has come.

In spite of this apparent prosperity the New-York Sacred-Music Society did not long enjoy the privilege of the sole patronage of New-York amateurs of sacred music. Other societies sprung up, though these, on the whole, only had a brief existence. Such was a new rival society, "The Academy of Sacred Music," an organization that sprung from the labors of T. Hastings.

Its members belonged to the choirs of several churches. In 1832 Th. Hastings received an urgent invitation to come to New York, where twelve churches were prepared to enter upon an experiment in reforming their music. They had tried various measures, but without success. Hastings endeavored to bring more order in the affairs of church-choirs. He was at first successful; for, as long as the broom had a new appearance, it swept well. Here are Hastings's own words:—

"Existing volunteer choirs were to be thoroughly drilled, new ones constituted, while the congregations at large were to receive instruction. Two or three churches were combined in each evening's labors. Afternoons, at one central place, were devoted to instruction in the rudiments of notation. These were open to all the city, and thousands of the population attended. These gained sufficient skill to unite in the evening classes, and these gave place to others equally destitute of information. The meetings, afternoon and evening, were well attended. The people had a mind to work, and a demand was made for a public demonstration by a great company of singers, and the result surpassed all expectation."

But differences of opinion arose among the churches, and this society, like so many others, disappeared. The musical public of New York began to awake to the need of higher musical achievements than the mere singing of weak psalm-tunes.

On Oct. 29, 1838, the Sacred-Music Society brought out Mendelssohn's oratorio "St. Paul." The "Apostle" thus found its way across the ocean only two years after his first appearance in Dusseldorf under the composer's own direction. The performance in New York was under the direction of U. C. Hill, who officiated as leader and conductor. This first performance in Amer-

ica of Mendelssohn's "St. Paul" does not seem to have made a marked impression on the New-York public. In fact, to judge from an odd criticism on the merits of the oratorio it seems to have disappointed musical connoisseurs. I will give a few extracts from that criticism which appeared in the "Musical Review" of that time. This will serve as landmarks of the degree of musical understanding and appreciation that were to be found among the journalists of that epoch.

The overture is pronounced good.

The chorus No. 2 was found to "contain many fine modulations; the whole a mass of grand harmonies."

The charming choral No. 3 is pronounced "very tame and destitute of effect."

The effective chorus, "Stone him to death," is found to be "pretty good."

The choral No. 9 "unmeaning and tame."

That exquisite chorus, "Happy and blest," is pronounced to be "rather good towards the close, but altogether too long and tedious. The accompaniment the most insipid that can be imagined." (!)

No. 12: "Recitative, very bad. Air sung well, but the solo itself is a most unmelodious one."

No. 13, "But the Lord is mindful of his own," so great a favorite at present, struck our critic as "untunable — a very poor air."

The chorus, "Rise up! arise and shine," is accepted as a fine chorus, "but too much instrumentation." Criticism was decidedly not yet up to the level of appreciation.

That fine and effective air, "O God, have mercy," is condemned as "tiresomely long, and destitute of mel ody."

In this vein our critic proceeds, and winds up by saying, that, —

"Upon the whole, I conceive this composition as an entire oratorio not likely to become a favorite; but some selections from it judiciously made would be well received. . . . I have been told that some musical gentlemen prefer this new oratorio even to the 'Messiah' and 'Creation.' I have not yet discovered any thing so extraordinary in it as to induce me to place it at all upon a par with these beautiful productions; but I am quite willing to acknowledge my obligations to the 'Sacred-Music Society' for bringing out something new."

Circumstances seem to have been unfavorable to this society; for in 1849 it was replaced by the New-York Harmonic Society.

The German population of New York had also their musical associations. At the epoch of which I am writing, there existed two such societies; one of which was the "Concordia," that met at Delmonico's for the improvement of instrumental and vocal music. This society met on Tuesdays for instrumental music, on Thursdays for singing, and on Saturdays for a repetition of both. The other society was composed of ladies and gentlemen for chorus practice.

The conductor of the Concordia was Mr. Schlesinger, one of the most remarkable German musicians then active in New York.

Daniel Schlesinger was born at Hamburg, Dec. 15, 1799. He displayed signs of exceptional musical talent at an early age, and began to have instruction on the pianoforte when only five years old. Later he took lessons on the violin. When the time came to choose a career it was young Schlesinger's ardent wish to make music his profession. But his mother and bro-

ther (he lost his father when yet quite a boy), apprehensive lest the profession of music should prove a precarious one, dissuaded him from his choice, and urged him to select a less hazardous vocation. He then chose the counting-house, his leisure hours being devoted to music. A few years later, while in London, he accidentally met at a friend's house Ferdinand Ries, who, having heard him play, advised him to adopt music as a profession. Schlesinger then became Ries's pupil, and made rapid progress as a pianist under this master's direction. He also had the advantage of Moscheles's instruction. In London he gave lessons, became a member of the Philharmonic Society, played in several concerts of that society, where he also produced some of his pianoforte compositions. In 1832 he concluded to make a professional tour on the Continent. He visited Hamburg (his native city), Leipzig, Vienna, Paris, and other cities. He went back to London, where he resumed his lessons, and produced several compositions; but, dissatisfied with his position, and at the instance of a brother, Schlesinger went to New York, where he arrived in 1836. He made his *début* in New York as a pianist at the National Theatre, but created little sensation. During his first winter, after his landing, he had three pupils. Besides the scarcity of money the price of instruction (three dollars per lesson) deterred many from employing him, who thought that what was a customary price in London and Paris, was exorbitant in New York. In 1837 Mr. Schlesinger performed the second time in public before a New-York audience. It was at a concert given by Mr. Russell. Mr. Schlesinger played Hummel's A-flat concerto and seems to have been much applauded. He

also played his own variations on American national airs. Here is what a critic in "The New-York American" of April 14, 1837, says of Schlesinger, —

"Mr. Schlesinger is a virtuoso of the highest musical attainments, who, to infinite grace and wondrous skill in execution, joins an extraordinary knowledge of the intricate principles of harmony. . . . His modulations thread with perfect self-possession its labyrinths, and evince that he holds in his fingers the only clew to such mazes, a perfect knowledge of thorough-bass and of the great masters' works, who have cherished this department with their discoveries."

This *naïve* criticism seems to show that such a necessary knowledge was then rare among New-York pianists.

Schlesinger's fourth public appearance was in a concert which he gave at the City Hotel, Nov. 24, the same year. He played Hummel's concerto in A-minor, Thalberg's fantaisie "Capuletti e Montecchi." The violoncellist Boucher also played at this concert. At a concert at the "Stuyvesant Institute," 1838, he brought out two movements of his quartet, — Thalberg's "Don Juan" fantaisie, and Weber's "Invitation to the Dance." In the same year he became the leader of the abovementioned German society, the "Concordia." Schlesinger, with Boucher and Kirchhoefer, played trios together every week (beginning of the cultivation of chamber-music in New York).[1] In the midst of his useful, artistic work, which might in later years have resulted in still further advancement of music in America, death called him away. Schlesinger died Jan. 8, 1838, at New York.

[1] See p. 274.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ORATORIO AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN BOSTON. — THE INTRODUCTION OF MUSIC IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

In 1830 the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston consisted of about one hundred male singers and about twenty-five female assistants.

"The membership has always been confined to the male sex. The ladies sing by invitation. During the first twenty years the chorus, male and female, was but small. In 1839 the average attendance at public performances was only about fifty, and the parts were poorly balanced; while some occupants of chorus-seats were reckoned 'dummies.' The time for real chorus discipline had not arrived. The average tone of membership, for many years, was hardly one of cultured refinement: 'first families' were not much represented in the ranks; mechanics, tradesmen, marketmen, etc., were those who sacrificed themselves to the good cause, and greatly to their credit. How good the singing was, it is hardly possible at this time to conjecture; for there would have been only an inadequate assemblage of a dozen or more available instruments." [1]

The society went on growing, and from year to year new works were added to its *répertoire*. But distracting influences, culminating in the withdrawal of members, and the establishment of rival organizations, greatly retarded the progress of the society during its exist-

[1] Dwight: History of Music in Boston.

ence. So in 1837 some discontented elements withdrew, and formed a new oratorio-society under the title of the "Boston Musical Institute." The withdrawal of so many of the most valuable members, in point of vocal efficiency, belonging to the Handel and Haydn Society, weakened its ranks very materially. But this disturbance affected the old society only temporarily. The "Boston Musical Institute," which bid fair to rival those societies already established, however, died a lingering death after three seasons. Ostinelli and Thomas Comer, of the Tremont Theatre, were the musical directors of the Boston Musical Institute. Among the works performed figured Mehul's opera, "Joseph and his Brethren;" but it was sung without scenery and action. The society also performed a sensational oratorio, "The Sceptic," by the English singer and popular ballad-composer, Henry Russell. The work was brought out under the direction and management of the composer, who, in the language of a Boston paper, "executed the principal solos with thrilling power and effect." The oratorio was, of course, short-lived, though experienced (?) judges spoke of it as "possessing considerable merit."

Thus the Handel and Haydn Society, like similar organizations scattered throughout the country, had its days of trial and adversity; sometimes the consequence of divided counsels and internal dissensions, and sometimes, as it has been shown, of powerful opponents, who divided with it the public patronage and support.

For the first twenty years the performances of the society were confined mainly to the "Messiah" and the "Creation." Other important works produced dur-

ing this period were Handel's "Dettingen Te Deum," Haydn's Mass in B-flat, and Mozart's in C, Haydn's "Storm" and "Te Deum," Beethoven's "Mount of Olives." In 1836 the society hit upon Chevalier Neukomm's shallow, empty oratorio, "David," which became very popular with its members and patrons. It was performed not less than seven times in the first season of its introduction; and for many years after it was a great favorite with the public.[1] At the time the Handel and Haydn Society revelled in Neukomm's "David's" beauties the work, no doubt, — considering the low standard of musical culture then, — fulfilled, to a certain degree, a certain mission, by attracting people to the society's performances; and thus interested many in music, whom a deeper and more serious oratorio would have probably "frightened away."

No salaries were paid by the society, as said above; but according to the record on June 6, 1837, it was voted to allow —— *five dollars* per evening for his services in the oratorio "David," he having sung the part of "David" many times during the season. This sum, however, was not satisfactory to —— (very naturally!), and the amount was doubled.

The price of admission to the oratorio performances was uniformly fifty cents.

I find also that the now famous American sculptor, Thomas Ball, began to appear as bass soloist at this

[1] This "David" became not alone a great favorite in Boston, but also in New York. Long after, when I was conductor of the "New-York Harmonic Society," some old members of the old "Sacred-Music Society" repeatedly told me of the merits of that wonderful composition, Chevalier Neukomm's "David;" and whenever a new oratorio was proposed for performance some one of those antiquarians would arise, and propose as a novelty "David." This poor "David," whom I knew too well, finally assumed, in my mind, the proportions of a "bugbear."

time; and in 1848, when Mendelssohn's "Elijah" was first performed in Boston, he sung the part of "Elijah," to the great satisfaction of the oratorio audiences.

Instrumental Music. — The people of Boston, and of New England in general, were slow in understanding and appreciating instrumental music. Orchestral players, who composed the small bands employed by different theatres, would sometimes be induced by some leader to venture on an instrumental concert, but they generally played to very small audiences and very inexperienced ears. The orchestra, as far as it could be brought together, was generally used as an accompaniment to cantatas and oratorios, as performed by the Handel and Haydn Society and others. The Boston Academy of Music, to be mentioned hereafter, endeavored to give instruction on different instruments; and even gave at some of their concerts orchestral pieces, but at first with very little success. I quote a passage from the Boston "Musical Magazine" of 1839, which makes the following pertinent remarks in connection with this subject: —

"The Boston Academy of Music has commenced this season on a very different and altogether novel plan. The expensive orchestra has been abandoned, and the choir reduced; and instead of the greater composition, — such as oratorios, cantatas, etc., — glees, songs, and lighter choruses are given, interspersed with instrumental solo performances. This plan, we believe, will prove more popular, and at the same time more beneficial to the cause of true art [!]. The public ear wants to be cultivated to the art, and the academy now offers the right means. The variety will be attractive; and the public will go there with pleasure to listen to the glees, choruses, or to very well performed vocal quartettes and solos. It will by and by learn to appreciate the instrumental music which is presented in addition. That these instrumental

performances should be regularly continued is very much to be desired; for instruments and instrumental music are as yet very little understood, and consequently not properly appreciated in this country. And the reason is plain. First-rate performers can do much better by remaining in Europe; and therefore we rarely, if ever, see them here. Paganini, for example, charged two guineas a ticket (about ten dollars) at his concerts in London; and yet the house was crowded, which would not, we think, be the case in Boston. Instrumental concerts, and instrumental performers at concerts, are of comparatively rare occurrence. The public, consequently, have not acquired a taste for them. This was sufficiently manifest at the first concert of the academy on Nov. 21. Some parts of the instrumental performances were of too high a character to awaken so little interest with the audience as they manifestly did. The solo on the violin in particular was a beautiful composition and well played; but we fear that the public generally have other associations too strongly connected with that instrument to be aware that its appropriate character is to make them *feel*."

Orchestral associations, devoted to the performance of symphonies, overtures, concertos, etc., have had, even until our present time a very checkered existence in the New-England capital. The violin, and its different companions, have had a hard struggle in making the Bostonians "*feel*," and forget the "*other associations too strongly connected*" with that instrument. It is not the way of orchestral players to make music as chorus-singers do. The band-player has to make his living by means of his profession; the amateur chorus-singer generally exercises a profession independent of musical practice, and sings as a recreation; the orchestral player cannot afford to entertain the public, and receive no remuneration for his services; and however deep his love and veneration for the great symphonic masterworks may be, the public cannot very well expect him

to starve himself in order to gratify the public's taste for the higher forms of orchestral music. Thoughtless amateurs often express the opinion that the band-player, and the professional musician in general, possess little enthusiasm for his art; that it is difficult to persuade him to render his services *gratis* to this or that enterprise undertaken by some enthusiastic amateur, solely in the interest for the promotion of higher musical culture. This is surely very unjust and even cruel. When do we hear of a merchant, a mechanic, a lawyer, etc., carrying on a lucrative business in the sole interest of the public, without receiving, or accepting, his own good share of the profits ? And yet — I speak here from experience and close observation — there is no class of men who give their professional services for the benefit of the public more frequently than musicians, although their chances of accumulating wealth are when compared to those of the merchant very slender indeed. The clear-eyed American knows this very well : it is, indeed, a rare occurrence to find an American devote his attention to the practice of an orchestral instrument with a view of turning band-player. It is self-evident that the orchestral player rather prefers to belong to a small theatre with a regular engagement all the year round, than to trust solely to the chances of playing here and there in a classical symphonic orchestra, or of travelling through the country with this or that manager with the view of making ungrateful provincials acquainted with the classic masterworks, to see himself in the end *minus* his justly earned salary. The great majority of orchestral musicians would infinitely prefer to devote their ability and talent to the performance of fine sympho-

nic and other classical works, than to play night after night those insipid things, destined to fill out the *entre-acte* pauses, in order to give the theatrical public an opportunity to chat and laugh.

It is but a natural consequence, that, under such circumstances, the musician's "cunning" in the handling of his instrument loses much of its elasticity and artistic readiness, and the artist often sinks down to a mere dance-hall player. It is surely astonishing, that, with the peculiar life the orchestral player has been so far forced to lead in this country, we can bring together when occasion calls for it such excellent and highly efficient bands, the nucleus of which may be found in the New-York Philharmonic Society.

The Academy of Music first furnished Boston with regular orchestral concerts. These concerts were given for several seasons.

Mr. J. S. Dwight, in his "History of Music in Boston," gives the following details regarding the first cultivation of orchestral music by the Academy of Music: —

"In that year (1839) Mr. Schmidt formed the nucleus of an Academy orchestra with an amateur club. These amateurs played with him a Mozartish symphony by Romberg, and several good overtures of the light and pleasing order. . . . In 1840 the Freyschütz overture began to be played. There were organ performances by Mr. F. F. Müller, violin solos by Mr. Schmidt, etc. . . . The concert (January 16, 1841) was wholly instrumental, — Romberg symphony, overtures to *Anacreon* (Cherubini), *Masaniello*, Weber's *Jubilee*, and solos. . . . In the eight concerts of the season ending February, 1841, the Academy brought out two of Beethoven's symphonies (for the first time to Boston ears); namely, the *first* and *fifth*, besides one by Romberg. . . . For seven winters these symphonic feasts were continued regularly at the rate of six or eight each season, for the most part in the Odeón (though finally they were compelled to take refuge in the Melodeon), until the public patron-

age fell off, and they came to an end, ever regretted by 'the appreciative few,' in the spring of 1847. The programmes, from an educational point of view, were most judicious: always a noble symphony, commonly by Beethoven, occasionally by Mozart, Haydn, Mendelssohn, while for relief and recreation after the close attention these required, there were always two or three light, captivating overtures by genial composers like Rossini, Auber, Reissiger, Lindpaintner, and Carafa. Nor was there wanting 'milk for babes' in the shape of instrumental solos, songs, duets, and choruses. . . . Six of the nine Beethoven symphonies became more or less familiar in these concerts; the *fifth* was the great favorite, and was given more than a dozen times; number *seven* at least nine times; the *pastoral* and number *four*, some four times each. Mendelssohn's *Scotch* symphony figured twice; a prize symphony by Lachner,[1] and one by Romberg. In one of the earlier concerts there were two symphonies, — the *Militaire* of Haydn and the 'Jupiter' by Mozart. In one programme only we find no symphony, but instead thereof six (!) overtures. These overtures, especially Auber's, were played over and over year after year, — more wholesome food than much of the light, or of the heavy, 'effect' music more recently and even now in vogue. But overtures of a higher character were not neglected: for instance, Mozart's *Titus*, Mendelssohn's *Hebrides* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The instrumental solos were for violin or 'cello, reeds or flute, and were commonly of a respectable order. The age of brass had not arrived. . . . The orchestra of the Academy must have been a small one, — from twenty-five, perhaps, to forty instruments, and made up in part of but indifferent materials. For two or three years it was conducted by tall Henry Schmidt, violin in hand. The annual *report* of 1843 congratulates the society on having for the first time a conductor with *bâton*, not playing in the orchestra himself. This was Professor Webb, supported by Mr. William Keyser from Holland, an old conservative, intelligent musician, at the head of the violins, and sometimes officiating as conductor. Under their reign things went on in a respectable and quiet way, with few concessions to bad taste; though there can be but little doubt that the decline and dying out of this most admirable movement was hastened by the want of vig-

[1] Probably the one of which Schumann wrote such a sharp criticism in his musical essays, "Music and Musicians."

orous young life in the conductorship. But it will readily be seen that that early experience of seven years' exposure to Beethoven programmes must, in spite of all shortcomings in performance, have set Beethoven well upon the way to an appreciation of the best in music. Doubtless we owe this wise resolve, this new departure, to the sagacity, the taste, the public spirit of his Honor the Mayor of Boston at that period, Samuel A. Eliot, president of the Academy throughout its whole career."

Chamber music was also partially cultivated at the Academy. But it seems that the first impulse to public performance of quartets, trios, sonatas, etc., was given in Boston by the late Bernhard Roelker, a distinguished lawyer and a connoisseur of music. About 1845 he urged his musical friends to subscribe to a series of classical chamber music concerts to be given by some professional musicians, who used to meet for private practice. The venture proved successful, and the cultivation of this form of music has since found faithful adherents in Boston (see Chap. XVI.).

After the Academy concerts came to an end a new orchestral society was formed, the "Musical Fund Society," which existed for a number of years, playing miscellaneous programmes, with no particular color. The "Musical Fund," however, served as a bridge, leading to better times. The band numbered in 1852 about sixty members. Here is what "Dwight's Journal of Music" for April, 1852, says, concerning the composition of the "Musical Fund" orchestra, —

"The string department has been excellent; but there has been continual complaint of want of unity of expression, of true intonation, of musical quality of tone, etc., in many of the wind instruments; and this, if we are rightly informed, is partly owing to the fact that some of the members who are skilled in the use of one instrument are here set to playing others, with which they are less perfectly familiar; and partly to the fact that the various

instruments have not been regulated primarily and exclusively to the sphere of this orchestra, but have been drawn from various minor orchestras and bands, acquiring, as it were, their local temperaments and habits. This evil, we believe, is understood, and will, no doubt, ere long be remedied; when we shall have an orchestra that may be compared with the Philharmonic orchestra of New York."

Boston in the course of several years had its different orchestras, philharmonic and otherwise, but none lived long. The only one which, with many ups and downs, managed to reach a tolerably long existence was the Orchestral Society, which gave its concerts under the auspices and management of the "*Harvard Musical Association.*" The establishment of this association, composed of alumni of Harvard College, dates back to Aug. 30, 1837. Its purpose may be seen from the following report: —

"A committee appointed at a meeting of the Pierian Sodality (and some of its honorary members present as guests) in July last, to carry into effect a plan of uniting with the present members of the club, in an active association for the cultivation of music in the college, presented a report advocating two principal objects which make such an association desirable.

"I. Finding ourselves together once, with enough to remember and to sympathize about, . . . we want some annual day of refreshing when we may feel young again; and here, if nowhere else, know that we are not alone in the world. This want is not supplied by the ordinary routine of commencement formalities and feastings. To most of us it is a dull day at best. The interest of the thing seems fast dying out; but we have associations in this place of peculiar interest. We were united in a little band, each with a few of our contemporaries, by the love of an art which always begets enthusiasm. Nothing unites men more than music. It makes brothers of strangers; it makes the most diffident feel at home; the most shy and suspicious, it renders frank and full of

trust; it overflows the rocks of separation between us; it comes up like a full tide beneath us, and opens a free intercourse of hearts. It is wholly a disinterested pursuit. . . . We propose, then, to form an association which shall meet here *annually* on commencement day: if for nothing more, at least to exchange salutations, and review recollections, and feel the common bond of music and old scenes. . . .

"II. But the ultimate object proposed is the *advancement* of the *cause of music* particularly in this university. We would have it regarded as an important object of attention within its walls, as something which sooner or later must hold its place in every liberal system of education; and that place not accidental or a stolen one, but formally recognized. We that love music feel that it is worthy of its professorship, as well as any other science. This muse is entitled to her representative in every temple of science. Her genial presence should be felt in every nursery of young minds."[1]

These young Harvard students in their noble enthusiasm proclaimed that it was their ultimate aim to have music "looked upon, not as an amusement, but as a serious pursuit; not a thing to divert the listless mind, but to expand it, nourish it, inspire it, and give it utterance. We would have its written productions, its master compositions, regarded as a *literature*, and hold a place in the archives of recorded thought and wisdom and inspired genius; *books*, only in another shape, which have helped to form man as much as history or metaphysics or poetry or numbers. We would have the statues of Handel and of Beethoven stand beside those of Homer and Plato and Newton and Shakspeare; each a presiding genius over a flourishing department in the republic of letters, where all *should* be equal. A sonata should be worth as much as an

[1] This passage ought to be printed in college catalogues, and then seriously acted up to by college authorities.

oration, a hymn or a sacred voluntary as a sermon or a prayer. We must annul that old article, which has ruled so long in colleges and schools and churches, that all *pleasant* pursuits are *idle*, and that all fascinations are of the Devil, and admit that there is room for conscience in the midst of pleasure." These ideas, put forth with so much boldness by young Americans, — at a time when the mere name of music was still considered by many as synonymous with all that is frivolous and idle, — must have greatly startled serious elderly Americans, the "Hastings" of Boston, who, no doubt, were then convinced, that if such a revolutionary programme would ever be carried out, in the interest of so seemingly useless a thing as music, the foundations of the public morals, of family, society, nay, the government, would be undermined, and ultimately utterly destroyed. How did these young scapegraces get those exaggerated ideas in their heads? How in the world will they ever manage to carry out such foolhardy designs? The idea of considering music equal to the other sciences! And how shocking to a religious mind to estimate a sacred voluntary as worth a sermon! Such expressions and thoughts on the part of many good Bostonians may have greeted the young club's musical intentions.

But the art-student who has carefully watched and studied the progress of musical culture in this country cannot help expressing admiration for the intelligent, candid, public utterance of the artistic aspirations of these Harvard students, and the high, noble aims that moved them to foster a more thorough and more universal musical cultivation. Then there was probably no professional musician in this country who was able

to come up to such an ideal programme, and surely there were none who could have conceived it. It was not alone a formidable one for the young men themselves to carry out, but also for those whose professional duty it was to become guides in a newer, higher, artistic direction. The report in question very justly says, —

"A large association of *educated men* for the cultivation of music would be a new thing in our country. It would supply a want which all the academies of music, and oratorio societies, useful as they are, have failed to supply. It would bring refinement to the aid of mechanical skill, and inspire the drudging artist to work with his soul as well as with his fingers. It would give music a higher rank in public estimation, till those who have taste and respectability should no longer feel degraded by singing in our churches."

The report is signed by E. S. Dixwell, J. S. Dwight, Henry Gassett, C. C. Holmes, J. F. Tuckerman, W. J. Davis.

One of the association's objects was to collect a musical library. We shall see, later, that these Harvard students meant to live up to their musical art principles, and to seriously help to hasten the needful reforms by carefully promoting the production of the great symphonic masterworks.

Music in the Public Schools. — Although much had already been done by the members of the Handel and Haydn Society in the interest of a more solid musical education in Boston, yet they no doubt felt the want of some institution that would afford better and ampler means for teaching young people the rudiments of vocal music, than those offered by the psalmodic singing-schools of the New-England psalm-tune teachers.

They saw that church-choirs and their musical society continually needed new and efficient recruits, in order to fill the places of those who left or became disabled by age. The best material for forming chorus-singers — the school-children — was close at hand; and it would have seemed but a comparatively easy problem to solve by introducing the teaching of vocal music into the grammar-schools. But the great hinderance to such an apparently easy step was the obstinate opposition of the parents, still greatly prejudiced against musical education. Those citizens, however, who most earnestly advocated a better and more thorough musical education determined to try the experiment of forming juvenile classes in a private way, and possibly of establishing a music-school for such a purpose.

In 1833 such an institution was organized under the name of the "Boston Academy of Music." From the first annual report of the newly established academy we gather the following regarding the ultimate organization of that institution:—

"In the summer of 1826 several gentlemen of Boston, who had been engaged for some time in efforts to introduce improvements in reference to sacred music, became acquainted with the views and plans of Mr. Lowell Mason, who was then delivering his lecture on church-music. He was induced to remove to Boston. Even at this early stage of the enterprise it was the ultimate design of those engaged in it to form an association, whose object should be to devise and execute extended means for the improvement and cultivation of sacred music. While this plan has been kept steadily in view constant efforts have been made to cultivate musical talents, to improve musical taste, and to awaken the interest of the community upon the subject, by the instruction of choirs, adult schools, and juvenile classes, under the direction of Mr. Mason.

"These measures were in progress in 1830, when a lecture on

vocal music was delivered before the American Institute of Instruction, illustrated by the performance of Mr. Mason's pupils, which opened to those interested in this subject a wider and more important field of operation than they had before contemplated."

The above lecture was that on "Vocal Music as a Branch of Common Education," by William C. Woodbridge.

Mr. Woodbridge, an American educator of great merit, while on a visit to Europe for the restoration of his broken-down health, took pains at the same time to study the different European systems of common-school education. Amid his observations of European manners he was struck by the importance with which music was cultivated, not alone in the home-circle, but also in the school. He looked upon the cultivation of music with the moral distrust and prejudice then prevalent among his countrymen.

"We regarded the accounts of its power [says he] rather as the dreams of poetry than the conclusions of philosophy, until we felt it in the heart-swelling music of the bands of Europe, in the fascinating but corrupting strains of the opera, and the overpowering chants of the Vatican. But we regard its cultivation to this extent with apprehension and disgust; for we saw it prostituted as we had seen it too much in our own country, either by using it to cover and point a song whose sentiments would not be tolerated in any other form, or by placing the most noble or the most solemn strains in the mouths of those who never felt a corresponding emotion.

"But we found music of an elevating and improving character in other hands. We found that, in addition to sacred and devotional music, there was a large collection adapted to social life, fitted to cheer the moments of weariness, to cultivate social and patriotic feelings, and elevate the moral taste, without suggesting one evil thought, or exciting one improper emotion. We had been accustomed to regard the regular pursuit of music — especially of in-

strumental music — as only suited to professional musicians or to females; and, in our sex, as the mark of a trifling or a feminine mind. It was a new surprise, therefore, to find it the companion of science and philosophy; to hear it declared by one learned professor the most valuable — nay, an indispensable — relaxation to his mind; and to find another, in one of the most distinguished music societies of Europe, devoting his leisure to the gratuitous instruction of some of its students.

"Our interest in this subject was redoubled, and music was presented in a new light on visiting the interior of Europe. It was with no small degree of surprise and delight that we found it in Germany, in Switzerland, *the property of the people*, cheering their hours of labor, elevating their hearts above the objects of sense, which are so prone to absorb them, and filling the periods of rest and amusement *with social and moral song in place of noise, riot, and gambling.*

"But we were touched to the heart when we heard its cheering, animating strains echoing from the walls of a schoolroom."

Mr. Woodbridge, while in Germany, and especially in Switzerland, where he studied the Pestalozzian method of instruction, became, from his own personal observations, strongly convinced of the excellent influence of music on the pupils of the Pestalozzian schools; and he began to appreciate the study of vocal music as an important school exercise, and of great educational influence. He accordingly procured all the information in his power respecting it, and obtained the most approved text-books of school or class exercises and songs, as well as elementary treatises on musical instruction. Among those were the admirable juvenile songs of Nägeli, and the Pfeiffer and Nägeli's treatise on singing, according to the Pestalozzian system of instruction. He even went to the trouble of translating into English some of those books, and placed them in the hands of Lowell Mason.

Mr. Mason, however, failed at first to perceive the superiority which Mr. Woodbridge claimed in favor of the Pestalozzian system as taught by Nägeli and others; but the efforts of Mr. Woodbridge were untiring. They were persevered in with such constancy, zeal, and good humor, that at last Mr. L. Mason consented to the proposed experiment of teaching a class after the Pestalozzian manner, as far as he was then able to understand it. As we have seen above the experiment proved successful, and Mr. Mason became a zealous apostle of the Pestalozzian method; but to the school-teacher Mr. Woodbridge belongs the great merit of having convinced Mr. Mason of the advantages of the new method over the antiquated psalm-tune method. The principles of the Pestalozzian system are considered by Mr. Woodbridge to be the following:—

"1. *To teach sounds before signs.* To make the child sing before he learns the written notes or their names.

"2. *To lead him to observe*, by hearing and imitating sounds, their resemblances and differences, their agreeable and disagreeable effect, *instead of explaining* these things to him. In short, to make him *active* instead of *passive* in learning.

"3. *In teaching but one thing at a time.* Rhythm, melody, expression, are taught and practised separately before the child is called to the difficult task of attending to all at once.

"4. *In making them practise each step of each* of these divisions, *until they are master of it, before passing to the next.* . . .

"5. The giving the principles and theory after practice, and as an induction from it.

"6. The analyzing and practising the elements of articulate sound in order to apply them to music.

"7. Another peculiarity, which is not, however, essential to the system, is, that the names of the notes correspond to those employed in instrumental music,[1] and are derived from the letters,

[1] Fixed pitch. See p. 85.

with variations for flats and sharps; a method whose utility is questioned by some, but which is deemed very important by others."

All this excellent new material, furnished by Mr. Woodbridge to those Boston gentlemen who were then interested in musical education, created a wholesome revolution in the methods of the psalm-tune teachers. Lowell Mason was intelligent and candid enough to appreciate its advantages, and afterwards largely profited by it.

As we have seen above, the successful experiment of the Pestalozzian system, made under the auspices of Woodbridge and Mason, led to the establishment of the "Boston Academy of Music." The programme of this new institution was the following: —

1. To establish schools of vocal music and juvenile classes.
2. To establish similar classes for adults.
3. To form a class for instruction in the methods of teaching music, which may be composed of teachers, parents, and all other persons desirous to qualify themselves for teaching vocal music.
4. To form an association of choristers and leading members of choirs, for the purpose of improvement in conducting and performing sacred music in churches.
5. To establish a course of popular lectures on the nature and object of church-music, and style of composition and execution appropriate to it, with experimental illustrations by the performance of a select choir.
6. To establish a course of scientific lectures.
7. To establish exhibition concerts.
8. To introduce vocal music in schools.
9. To publish circulars and essays.

The programme of the Boston Academy of Music must be pronounced a formidable one; but, considering the comparatively meagre means then at the disposal of its directors, it was out of the question to carry it out to the letter. The first and most important object, however, which led to the establishment of the music-school was realized: the educated classes of Boston became interested in the new musical departure. True, many young ladies of the wealthier families received private instruction on the piano or in singing. English, German, and Italian music-teachers were to be found at this time in Boston. But the aim of Lowell Mason and his associates was to reach the masses of the people. Pupils from all sides flocked to the newly established Academy of Music. The second annual report of the institution records the whole number of pupils taught to have been twenty-two hundred. The report accentuates the necessity of introducing the instruction of vocal music, as an ordinary branch of study, into common schools.

"It is hoped that some satisfactory experiments may soon be made, which may diminish the indifference or prejudice which now exists on this subject; and that vocal music will, at no distant day, be generally included among the branches of common-school education."

The report also prints the favorable testimony of some of the most respectable teachers of private schools of Boston and its vicinity, who had consented that an experiment should be made of teaching their pupils vocal music as advocated by Woodbridge, Mason, and others.

Vocal exercises at first formed the principal feature of musical instruction at the academy. The fourth annual

report (1836) announces that Mr. Keller is to preside over the orchestra, and give instrumental instruction in that department. The following year an orchestra was formed, composed of amateurs and professional musicians, under the leadership of Mr. Schmidt. The choir of the academy then consisted of one hundred and sixty-three members.

"There have been ten public performances by the choir. Three new pieces have been brought out; viz., Neukomm's 'David;' Romberg's music to Schiller's 'Bell;' and the 'Feast of the Tabernacles,' the poetry of which was composed by the Rev. Henry Ware, and the music by Charles Zeuner, a gentleman of taste and skill, and a resident of this city."

Thus the artistic labors of the Academy of Music expanded in every direction.

"But [adds the report] it would be gratifying, if, to these encouraging indications of success, there could be added an account equally flattering of our financial success. The balance remained on the wrong side of the sheet."

The public performances did not pay expenses, and so the managers of the Academy found it necessary to discontinue concerts and oratorios; "for the government became satisfied that a taste for this species of music is not so prevalent among our countrymen as to justify a further outlay for its gratification." The seventh report (1839), which lies before me, reviews the labors of the academy for the previous seven years, and expresses much satisfaction with many of its results. The tone of the report is, however, less enthusiastic, less hopeful for the future existence of the institution. It nevertheless went on with its labors until 1847, when it closed its doors. However, in its first

successful flurry, the institution was looked upon throughout the United States as an authority in musical matters. The third annual report (1835) states with pride that —

"Letters have been received from persons in Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, Illinois, Missouri, Tennessee, Ohio, Maryland, New York, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine, besides many individual societies in Massachusetts, asking for information relative to measures which they ought to adopt in order to introduce music as a branch of education into the communities where they live."

During all this time Lowell Mason and his friends, though greatly occupied with the affairs of the academy, never lost sight of their great purpose of seeing the teaching of vocal music introduced into the common schools. Finally, in the year 1836, a memorial was presented by the Academy of Music to the school committee, urging the propriety of introducing vocal music as a branch of instruction in the grammar-school. The memorial was referred to a select committee, who gave the applicants a hearing. This committee, Aug. 24, 1837, handed to the board a report favorable to the project, and asked the board to adopt the subjoined resolutions : —

"*Resolved*, That the experiment be tried in the four following schools, the Hancock School, for girls, in Hanover Street; the Eliot School, for boys, in North Bennet Street; the Johnson School, for girls, in Washington Street; and the Hawes School, for boys and girls, at South Boston.

"*Resolved*, That this experiment be given in charge of the Boston Academy of Music, under the direction of this board, and that a committee of five be appointed from this board to confer with the Academy, arrange all necessary details of the plan, oversee its operations, and make quarterly reports thereof to this board.

"*Resolved*, That this experiment be commenced as soon as practicable after the passing of these resolutions, and be continued and extended as the board hereafter may determine.

"*Resolved*, That these resolutions be transmitted to the city council, and that they be respectfully requested to make such appropriations as may be necessary to carry this plan into effect." [1]

The committee, endeavoring to answer the different objections raised against music, said, among other things, —

"It is objected, if one accomplishment is introduced into our schools, why not another? If instruction is given in vocal music, why should it not be given in dancing also? The answer simply is, because music is not dancing; because music has an intellectual character, which dancing has not; and, above all, because music has its moral purposes, which dancing has not."

There was, however, for a long time, much hesitation in recommending any expenditure for the object of the city council; and, in order to give an irresistible demonstration of the simplicity and practicability of the plan, Mr. Mason consented to give instruction in one of the schools, *gratis*, for one year. The experiment succeeded, and dispelled all doubts. Towards the close of the year a vote was passed, the board with great unanimity recommending the introduction of vocal music as a branch of instruction into the public schools of Boston.

This step of the common council of Boston was of the greatest importance to musical development in

[1] I vainly endeavored for a long while to obtain dates, etc., regarding the time of the introduction of vocal music into the Boston public schools. All those gentlemen from whom I requested information about dates — some of them even connected with the Boston grammar-schools as music-teachers — were unable to give it to me; some, though involuntarily, sent me wrong dates. The above highly interesting report I found in one of my own books, bound together with other pamphlets, and which had previously escaped my notice.

America; and Lowell Mason's merit in helping to further this great result with such conviction and tenacity will be long recognized. This work was, in my opinion, of more importance than his semi-amateurish teachings about church-music.

The fact that music was now to stand on an equal footing with the other educational branches of the common school assigned it more dignity, and gradually disarmed its puritanical enemies. It is also significant that this important step in the interest of an art once despised was first taken in the old stronghold of the New-England Puritans. Boston has since faithfully carried out this provision regarding musical instruction in her grammar-schools. She has earned the benefit resulting from this careful fostering of vocal music. Her Handel and Haydn Society, and numerous other vocal organizations, have never since lacked efficient members. Even throughout the Union this step was eventful; for all the principal cities, north and south, east and west, gradually followed her noble example, by admitting the instruction of vocal music into their schoolrooms. We must regard, as an excellent and effective result of this educating the people at large in vocal music, the many efficient chorus societies that are now springing up in every city throughout the States.

CHAPTER XIII.

MUSICAL CONVENTIONS.

MUSICAL conventions, as held in different places throughout the United States, are entirely American institutions. Though the practice of European musical festivals may have at first suggested the idea of holding annual musical conventions, yet the exercises which take place at the American conventions are of an entirely different nature from those of the European musical festivals. The "Yankee" musical convention was at the outset a meeting of church-choirs, under the direction of psalm-tune teachers, for the purpose of promoting sacred music as they then understood it. To study and sing new psalm-tunes, short anthems, and now and then a chorus from an oratorio, was the regular work of these meetings. The idea of holding musical conventions originated in New Hampshire. In September, 1829, the Central Musical Society of that State held the first convention at Concord. It was a two days' meeting, and was conducted by Henry E. Moore. The following year one was held at Pembroke; and from that time until now conventions have annually occurred at different places. These musical conventions, however, reached a greater importance when Boston became the centre of meeting. The origin of

the Boston convention was, according to the "Musical Recorder," as follows: —

"In the month of August, 1834, a course of lectures was delivered, by the professors of the Boston Academy of Music, to teachers of singing-schools and others. The design was to illustrate the Pestalozzian method of teaching vocal music in classes. These lectures were attended by twelve persons, most of whom had already been accustomed to teach. In August, 1835, a similar course, including additional lectures and exercises, designed to illustrate different styles of church-music, taste, and appropriate manner of performances, was repeated, with still greater success. This class was attended by eighteen persons, besides several of the class 1834.

"In August, 1836, the number of the class was increased to twenty-eight, besides members of previous classes. The gentlemen present on this occasion organized themselves into a convention for the discussion of questions relating to the general subject of musical education, church-music, and musical performances, during such hours as were not occupied by the lectures. These discussions were found to be highly interesting and useful."

In August, 1837, the master-mind, Lowell Mason, of these conventions, being in Europe, no gathering took place.

At the meeting in August, 1838, the interest taken in the convention was a very lively one, judging from proceedings that reflected the spirit of many of the members that gathered at Boston. Great dissatisfaction was expressed with the manner in which Lowell Mason and his friends endeavored to manage the affairs of the convention. An effort was then made to separate the convention from its former connection with the class as organized under the auspices of the Academy of Music. Says C. W. Lucas, a noted musical convention man, in his "Remarks on the Musical Conventions," —

"It now being generally understood that the class and convention were to be distinct institutions, that the exercises of the one should not interfere with the proceedings of the other, many musical teachers and amateurs from different parts of the country, who felt no interest in the class, became members of the convention. Among these were the venerable Barton Brown, the lamented Moore, and many others, who did not consider the introduction of the professors in the Boston Academy of Music as the *ne plus ultra* of all musical light and excellence. For several days the discussions of the convention took a wide and liberal range. It was soon perceived, however, that such freedom of debate was not agreeable to Mr. Mason and his party satellites.[1] It flashed too much light across his orbit, involved some questions which might affect the sale of music-books, and excited his displeasure at the presence of those who saw fit to differ from him in opinion. This was no sooner discovered than two parties arose in the convention."

This meeting was, on the wholè, a highly important one: ninety-six gentlemen and forty-two ladies were present. It also became desirable to many members to place the convention on a more independent and a broader basis, and to enlarge its sphere of usefulness. To this end a committee was appointed to draught a suitable constitution.

The idea of forming a general musical convention, in which the different local conventions that existed in some States could take part, was broached by the "Family Minstrel" as early as 1838. In the March number of that paper the editor says, —

"We are now going to commence advocating a project which will appear *outré* to some, but which, on mature examination, will appear expedient to all. It is a project for a general musical convention. Those acquainted with the movements of the present times are aware that popular conventions for the attainment of

[1] A protest against "boss-ism."

great national and local objects have been repeatedly held. Conventions ecclesiastical and conventions political, conventions for temperance and conventions for freedom, — in fine, conventions for nearly every subject that interests our countrymen, — have been ever and anon the order of the day. Now, amid this union of effort, alike creditable to our institutions and to our genius as a people, why may not the numerous and important classics of music be presented in a similar manner?"

The Boston Music Academy class, as at first controlled by Lowell Mason & Co., was gradually drifting into the direction of a general musical convention as agitated by the "Family Minstrel."

At the meeting at Boston in August, 1839, a still larger number of members was present, — nearly two hundred gentlemen, and about sixty-five ladies. A constitution was reported, but rejected as unsuitable. A majority of the members, however, felt the importance of a constitution; and to this end a new committee was appointed to propose and present one at the next annual meeting of the convention. Says the "Reporter," —

"The convention at this session had assumed an entirely different character from what it formerly possessed. Difficulties had arisen between the professors of the Boston Academy of Music, in consequence of which a large number of the class felt disposed to form an independent convention. The constitution which was presented was an instrument for a great national institution. . . . The framers of this constitution probably had higher motives than to present one designedly calculated to interfere with any existing institution. Their object was to make the convention perfectly free from any connection with other institutions, and thereby independent of all local prejudices or sectional interests."

In August, 1840, the convention met again at Boston. The draught of a new constitution was presented

and adopted. The convention was to be in future the "National Musical Convention." Art. II. says that the "object of the convention shall be to consider the best methods of advancing the cause of music, and of promoting its general cultivation." This meeting seems to have been tolerably harmonious and interesting. Mr. Eliot gave a lecture on the sources of gratification in music, the Rev. Mr. Albro one on sacred music. Great interest was also taken in the new translation, by Mr. Warner, of G. Weber's work on the theory of music. I here copy some of the resolutions that were passed by this convention at the close of its meeting. They clearly point out the aspirations, and state of musical culture, among the American musical profession in New England.

"*Resolved*, That the greatly increasing number of the members in the present convention, above that of any former one, . . . is clear proof of a settled and steadily increasing musical interest in the community. . . .

"That the extraordinary power of music over the human constitution places it among the most effective of all the instruments that can be employed in controlling the springs of action, and in the formation of character; and that, consequently, every friend of his species ought, in every possible way, to avail himself of its use. . . .

"That it is the duty of teachers to use their exertions to introduce music into all the schools of the country. . . .

"That public lectures, by clergymen and others, be recommended as among the most effectual means of awakening an interest in the community for the general cultivation of music. . . .

"That the effectiveness of the music of the church is materially increased by the addition of instrumental accompaniment, and that, among all the instruments to be employed for this purpose, the organ is the most suitable; and this convention, therefore, recommends its general use. . . .

"That it is entirely essential to the desired advancement of

the cause of music, that a larger amount of the *intellectual* be brought in connection with the *practical;* that in this respect there exists in our country, and even in our language, a deep and wide *chasm;* that, instead of those able and standard works without which neither the individual can avail himself of the best qualifications, nor the art itself receive due justice, we have but an empty void, which leaves our best efforts comparatively without a guide, and our most toilsome endeavors comparatively unavailing."

The Boston musical gatherings, under the auspices of the "National Musical Convention," were of short duration. At the outset it owed its independence to a quarrel which, in 1839, arose between L. Mason and Mr. Webb. The importance which the National Musical Convention seemed to acquire was detrimental to the interests of the class conducted by Mason: means were therefore found by the Mason party to destroy the independence of the National Musical Convention, in order to protect their own private interests. The convention of 1841 took place Aug. 19, and continued its sittings six days. On Aug. 25 it was voted that the National Musical Convention be dissolved. According to my sources this dissolution was brought about by party feeling long existing between some leading musicians and musical societies in Boston, which had been aggravated and increased by persons from abroad, who came to the convention with the evident intention of producing discord and division. From the materials of the old convention two new ones were formed, which, it was hoped, would labor for art, art in its entirety, and nothing but art. At the head of one party stood Lowell Mason with the Boston Academy of Music; at the head of the other, G. W. Webb and the Handel and Haydn Society. Each of these parties assembled in 1841, the time of the annual meeting of the National Musical

Convention teachers' classes. Each one offered an attractive programme to those who wished to profit by their instruction. The amount of work the teacher-pupil was required to accomplish during a *ten days'* course was enormous. There were lectures on vocal culture, on harmony, on composition, on church-music, on the pianoforte, on the organ, on the violin, violoncello, double-bass, flute, clarinet; and lectures on musical taste or æsthetics of music, etc. We see by these programmes, as issued by the two parties, that the idea of the conventions, originally agitated for the sole study and promotion of sacred music, psalmody, gradually assumed a wider scope; and, although it was an impossibility to do half justice to the teaching of the different subjects, some good was done by such short annual courses. Some good seed was sown in many directions. A general interest in musical cultivation was awakened throughout the country. The psalm-tune teacher, the small music-teacher from small country-towns, the member of a church or a small local singing-society, gathered some new and much-needed information, heard new works rendered by a good chorus, or was able to enjoy the inspiring performance of some noted artist. He thus took home with him some good material to ponder over, to work out in the best manner he was able to do, during the year. Though the great task of awakening taste and understanding for fine compositions progressed slowly and unequally, yet it progressed. With the advent of better and more frequent opportunities of hearing good works well presented, and the much desired advantage of having music in all its different branches well taught, throughout the year, progress in all directions was hastened. Thus the conventions have,

on the whole, exerted a good influence on musical development. They felt the urgency of cultivating music before the masses of the people did so, and were instrumental in destroying the old and deep prejudices which the great majority of the American people entertained against musical art. Gradually, in all the most important places, musical societies sprang up, generally out of the material, or through some members, of a convention, and made the convention superfluous. In many large places annual musical festivals succeeded annual musical conventions in consequence of progress; greater means in every form having fallen to the share of the present local musical societies.

The Boston Musical Convention, after the dissolution of the National Musical Association, yet lived on for some years under the name of "American Musical Convention," again controlled by the head of the Boston Academy of Music. All through the east, west, and south, musical conventions, after the model of the Boston meetings, were organized; and the convention music-teacher began to form a peculiar, but for a time important, part of the American musical profession. These teachers, generally leaders of church-choirs, kept up the old, but still lively, business of writing those *very* chaste, *naïve*, and popular ballad psalm-tunes, or compiling and publishing old collections with new and startling titles, or writing new singing methods out of stale material or musical manuals, in order to diffuse musical knowledge according to the "eclectic system," or no system.

But the large musical conventions had now dwindled down to a casual gathering of some music-teachers, under the management of some old remnant or success-

or of the old convention music-teacher. The organizers of the modern musical conventions, musical institutes, musical normal schools, etc., with their imposing *faculties* of professors, pick out some convenient country town to pass their vacation in; and, uniting "the useful with the agreeable," endeavor, during that short time of a few weeks' recreation, to initiate the "country lad and country lass" into all the mysteries and beauties of Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, and Wagner. "Honi soit qui mal y pense."

FIFTH PERIOD, 1842–1861.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW-YORK PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

CHAPTER XIV.

PROGRESS OF THE CULTIVATION OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC AND THE ORATORIO IN NEW YORK.

THE preceding period must be considered *highly important* in the annals of musical development and progress in the United States. Though the efforts of many for a permanent establishment of opera in America proved fruitless, the practical benefit musical culture received from successive attempts in the operatic line was very valuable. A number of fine singers — some of them great ones — were introduced to the American public, who, as with a sudden flash, revealed to inexperienced amateurs, most of whom had been surrounded by the desultory musical movement of the psalm-tune singing-society in their early days, the ideal beauties of exceptionally fine voices, trained in the best European schools of vocal art. Many of these artists appeared in concerts and oratorios, thus spreading their healthful artistic influence in many directions. It was this early experience, among an ever-increasing number

of musical amateurs, in listening to fine singers, that gave a new turn to their musical predilections, and even enabled them to gain distinction as singers themselves. In the amateur's early childhood the singing of juvenile songs and sacred hymns was his only musical experience. The germ was laid, however; and, on suddenly discovering what great feats the human voice was capable of, his choice was made: he became a singer, or an admirer of singing, almost exclusively.

But this was not the only benefit due to Italian operatic performances. Since the musical forms of opera rest upon fine instrumental accompaniments efficient orchestral bands become necessary in order to do justice to such accompaniments. The small bands at the theatre were not adequate to do the work. Without good strings, good wood wind-instruments, good, discreet brass, the desired euphony, required even by the (on the whole) slenderly scored old Italian opera, was out of the question. After Garcia's experience in this direction succeeding opera-managers brought with them experienced conductors and leaders of orchestras, and even some distinguished instrumental performers.

We have seen that, occasionally, at some society's concerts, tolerably large orchestras were brought together. Thus the band that was engaged to play at the annual concert of the old "Euterpean[1] Society" shows a goodly number of fine orchestra players who then resided in New York. We have also seen that the idea of the establishment of a philharmonic society haunted the minds of musicians at an early period: several unsuccessful attempts at the organization of such a society were even made. Towards the beginning of our pres-

[1] See p. 220.

ent period some of New York's leading musicians became more and more convinced that the time for an American philharmonic society had arrived. The final, decisive step for the formation of such a society was hastened by the following circumstance.

After the death of Daniel Schlesinger a "grand musical solemnity" took place in honor of his memory, and for the aid of his widow. On this occasion an orchestra of sixty performers was collected. Among other works Weber's overture "Der Freyschütz," and the last movement of Beethoven's second symphony, were performed with much effect, particularly the overture.

The favor with which this concert was received by the public encouraged musicians to make further efforts towards the establishment of a symphonic society. But, as in all such artistic enterprises, some man of great enthusiasm for, and sincere devotion to, art is generally needed to urge and incessantly work for the promotion of the important object, the successful carrying out of which often seemed at first very doubtful to many.

The musician to whose untiring zeal and energy the music-lovers of New York already owed so much for his bringing out some fine works, especially oratorios; and who felt, perhaps, more than any other New-York musician, the great benefit American musical development would derive from the permanent establishment of an orchestral society like the London Philharmonic Society, devoted to the cultivation of the masterworks of the great symphonic composers, was a native American, a musician whom we have repeatedly met during the musical movement of the last period of this

history, — *U. C. Hill.* I consider it but a simple act of justice to the memory of this honorable musician to give a short sketch of his life, his sad end, and a record of his labors here.

Uriah C. Hill [1] was born in Greenwich Street, near Cortlandt Street, New York, about 1802. He learned to play the violin, and, as a young musician, was found playing in different bands in New York. He afterwards became conductor of the Sacred-Music Society, and, with the best means at his disposal, brought out several important works. In 1836 he went to Europe to study the violin under Louis Spohr at Cassel. Though he was not a violinist of great powers, and not a musician of great general knowledge and accomplishments, yet he had such profound faith in the noble mission of music, and exhibited such unbounded enthusiasm with regard to the promotion of the best interests of music, so far as he understood these, that he for a time succeeded where others, perhaps superior to him in talent and *savoir-faire*, would have failed. Thus, when he began to work for the establishment of a permanent orchestral society, — the Philharmonic Society, — he did not stop to consider the possibility of his project, or the possibility of many drawbacks in the way of the courageous promotion of the new musical enterprise. He firmly believed in the success of the plan, and restlessly — almost doggedly — endeavored to find means to carry it out. He gradually succeeded in persuading other New-York orchestral musicians to unite with him in the new attempt; and finally, wearied by delays caused by

[1] Some of the above material was kindly furnished me by Mr. A. Reiff, a member of the Philharmonic Society, and whose father, a bassoon player, was one of the most active members when the society was first established.

the doubts and fears of his colleagues, he, with the assistance of A. Reiff, A. and H. B. Dodworth, and others, assumed the responsibility of calling a meeting at the Apollo Rooms on Saturday, April 2, 1842. Hill even took the trouble of personally notifying the musicians to attend the meeting, when he told them "they had met for the purpose of considering the possibility of forming a society of professional musicians residing in the city, having for its object the advancement of instrumental music, and the performance of a number of concerts each year, to be of a higher order than any thing that had ever been given in the city." The society was formed. Besides his musical professional occupations Hill always endeavored to carry on some other enterprise. Thus he invented a piano, which he claimed would never get out of tune. Little bells were employed instead of wire strings. He exhibited it in New York, and then went to London with it; but the venture proved a failure. Later he went West, and passed several years in Cincinnati. On his return East he settled in Paterson, N.J., invested in real estate there; but the speculation proved unproductive. Pecuniary difficulties were the result, so that the latter part of his life was a continual struggle to meet his obligations. Under these circumstances it was impossible for him to keep step with the growing demands made on an orchestral player. He was one of the first violins in the Philharmonic Society, but, on account of age, was obliged to resign this post. This, in connection with his other misfortunes and disappointments, crushed the honest musician completely; and in an hour of despair he took his own life in September, 1875. He was then about seventy-three years old.

At the above-mentioned meeting a committee of five — consisting of Messrs. Hill, Penson, Walker, Dodworth, and Rosier — was appointed to frame a constitution, which was adopted April 23; and a board of officers was elected, consisting of U. C. Hill, *President;* A. Reiff, *Vice-President;* F. W. Rosier, *Secretary;* A. Dodworth, *Treasurer;* W. Wood, *Librarian.* The number of members that signed the constitution at its adoption was thirty-seven. At the meeting of May 7 an addition was made to the number of officers of two assistants, and Messrs. A. Boucher and H. Otto were elected as such. Meetings for rehearsal were immediately commenced, and continued almost weekly until the first concert, which was given Dec. 7, 1842. During the first season only three concerts were given. The second season it was concluded to give four concerts.

Here is a list of members of the first season: —

Violins: De Luce, G.; Dodworth, H. B.; Ensign, J. L.; Hill, U. C.; Herzog, C.; Hellwig (afterwards trombone); Helfenritter; Knaebel (often horn); Marks, H.; Martini, L.; Meyrer, C. W.; Otto, H.; Pazzaglia; Sage, M. H.; Sauer, C.; Wiegers, L.; Weis; Wolf; Windmüller.

Violas: Chevalier; Derwort, C. H.; Grebner; Goodwin, Th.; Johnson, S.

'Celli: Boucher, A.; Milon, S.; Musgrief, W.; Walker, D.

Double Basses: Jacoby, C.; Loder, G.; Pierson, J.; Rosier; Schneider.

Flutes: Ernst, P.; Gosden, J.; Kyle, J. A.

Piccolo: Dodworth, C.

Oboe: Ribas; Wiese.

Clarinets: Gronevelt; Stark.

Bassoons: Kyle, A.; Reiff, A.; Hegelund.

Horns: Munson; Nidds; Trojsi; Woehning.

Trumpets: Wolter; Brown.

Trombones: Dodworth, T.; Daga; Plain, W.; Schütz, C.

Kettle-drums: Wood.

Timm, H. C., Piano and Trombone; Sharfenberg, W., Piano and Violin; V. Wallace, Piano and Violin; Etienne, D. C., Horn.

The Philharmonic Society was incorporated Feb. 17, 1853.[1] The performances at the concerts of the first seasons often were amateurish. But both the musicians and the subscribers felt a keen interest in the society. If there was a good deal of roughness in the performances, there was also a good deal of enthusiasm and life.

The first concerts were given in the "Apollo Hall," a ball-room occasionally let for concerts; it was situated on Broadway, near Canal Street. The seats used when a concert took place consisted of ugly wooden benches. There were no ushers. At a Philharmonic Concert four of its members were appointed to seat the audience; they carried wands to point out seats with. These four members, selected from the best-looking and tallest young men of the society, well dressed, and of gentlemanly deportment, were provided with white kid gloves by the society.[2] After the audience was seated they took their accustomed places in the orchestra. Paid ushers began to be employed in 1854. During the performance of a piece the whole orchestra, with the

[1] The history of the New-York Philharmonic Society is a highly important one. The society, during its long existence, has exercised a great influence on New York's musical life; nay, it can truly be said, that it became a great enlivening force in musical culture in America. It is therefore a pity that the documents bearing witness to the society's past labors and history have been allowed to disappear. The absence of such official matter renders it extremely difficult for the historian to do full justice to the subject; and this difficulty becomes increased on account of the reticence of some of the present officials of the Philharmonic Society.

[2] They were often envied by the other younger members on account of those "official" kid gloves.

exception of the 'cello players, stood up. Leaving the platform during the performance of vocal or instrumental solos was then not allowed. "It looks vulgar," said a gentleman to me at a Philharmonic Concert, "to see half the orchestra scamper out as though they were glad to be spared the ordeal of hearing a fellow-artist perform; and yet the soloists are engaged by the directors of the society."

One of the most important features of the work of the Philharmonic Society was the introduction of the "Public Rehearsals," held on the Friday afternoon before each concert. The advantage these "Public Rehearsals" afford is twofold: they offer the regular subscribers an opportunity to hear any classical or modern work performed twice within a short interval of time, and to get thus better acquainted with the form and musical meaning of such compositions; and the other is that many musical ladies of the city, or from the neighborhood, can, without the escort of a gentleman, attend and enjoy these performances also. These "Philharmonic Public Rehearsals" are now finished performances; fifteen or twenty years ago the conductor would stop the orchestra and make corrections if he thought it necessary to do so.

The Philharmonic Society has received, from the very beginning of its existence, an, on the whole, generous support at the hands of the New York press. We often meet with long and rather exhaustive articles bearing on the principal works performed, and the manner of the society's performance. Musicians and critics have seemed to endeavor to perform their respective duties honestly, in order to promote musical progress in the commonwealth. To be sure, sometimes, the society

has, deservedly or undeservedly, experienced harsh rebukes at the hands of the critics. Latterly, censure, instigated by malicious intriguants, has sometimes assumed the character of wilful persecution.

I will translate here part of an interesting correspondence written, in 1846, by a New York German musical amateur, and a friend of the society, to the Leipzic "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik."

Your journal, which is read with great interest by German musicians here, brings reports from all places and all parts of the world excepting America, of whose musical affairs we have not yet been able to discover anything in its columns. We have often wondered at the fact that German musical papers do not think it worth while to give news relating to our concerts, operas, oratorios, etc. Many a European surely would read with pleasure something concerning those musical half-Indians (this is probably what European musicians take us to be) if only that they might be able to say, "How backward you are; how much you have got to learn!" The Philharmonic Society is the best musical institution here. It is organized entirely on republican principles. Professional musicians only can become members. The society is at present composed of about seventy-five members. . . . The society, for the last four years, has enjoyed great prosperity, being patronized by Americans; it does as well as one has a right to expect from a people whose degree of musical education has not yet reached that of Europeans. Though the price of subscription is rather high (ten dollars), the attendance at the concert is so large that from 400 to 500 persons cannot find admittance, on account of the insufficient room. It is seriously proposed to remedy this shortcoming. Meetings have been frequently held with the object of considering the feasibility of the erection of a Philharmonic Hall. The cost for such a hall is estimated at $100,000, and $20,000 have been already subscribed by members. The American does not refuse to spend his money, provided he can hear and see something good; it is only for trifles that he refuses to pay.

Special praise is due to G. Loder, the conductor of the society. He is animated with great zeal, and his efforts deserve recognition.

Not only has he succeeded in making the orchestra play the most difficult pieces with precision, but he also understands how to render them according to their character. Lately an overture of his composition, "Marmion," was performed to the satisfaction of the professional musician and of the public. . . . Had Mr. Loder had the opportunity to study music in Europe, he undoubtedly would have produced something better still. We have no opportunity here to attain an artistic education. To be sure, we have money enough to procure artistic enjoyment, but no time in order to learn art; money-making absorbs all our leisure and attention. It is above all necessary to clear the soil of weeds in order to make art flourish. Only with the help of thoroughly educated musicians can musical culture be infused into a nation.

If, in Europe, the virtuoso nuisance had been prevented from spreading, and all contemptible, weak compositions banished, musical taste would have been the gainer by it. Here it is still time to keep off that misfortune; in Europe it is too late now. [Well, America could not "keep off that misfortune"; the "virtuoso nuisance" spread here with a vengeance, and is still rampant.]

A German opera — but a German one only — would be very sure to keep its own here, but neither a French nor an Italian one, especially since the American people prefer German music to French and Italian tinkling sounds (Klingelei). If five or six able male singers, and several pretty and agreeable female singers, led by an efficient conductor, were to come over, they would, no doubt, win success. To be sure, there must be nothing objectionable as to their character, otherwise the Germans would desert them, and they would then be ruined. The American is not yet initiated into European affairs; but he learns much from foreigners that arrive here every week from all parts of Europe. Chorus and orchestra can easily be engaged here; about 80,000 Germans live here, and many available persons could thus be found.

Regarding the building of a Philharmonic Music Hall, to which reference is made above, the programme of the third concert (fourth season), March 7, 1846, gives an announcement of the society's intention in respect to this enterprise which I transcribe in full: —

Splendid Musical Edifice and Grand Concert.

The subscribers and all members of the PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY, and others who feel interested, are earnestly requested to attend a meeting at the Coliseum, 450 Broadway (third floor) on the 14th March inst., at half past 7 o'clock, P.M., when a plan will be submitted to carry into effect the erection of an edifice, adapted to all musical and other purposes, fully commensurate with the wants of the New York public.

It being admitted that such a building is required for the increasing taste of our citizens, and the necessity of its erection having been acknowledged for many years, it is now proposed carry it forthwith into effect.

The plan of the Concert (which will be given in May next, on a most magnificent scale, by the members of the Philharmonic Society) will then also be submitted. The proceeds of the Concert are to be appropriated towards the erection of the building.

And a New York daily journal of the time says:—

There will be between 300 and 400 performers, and Beethoven's Choral Symphony, No. 9, will be given, making this an era in the musical world. The concert, independent of the attraction of the music, will give all who feel interested an opportunity to come forward, and by this means aid in this great undertaking. Subscription lists will be found in the Music Stores. Ladies' Tickets $2, Gentlemen's Tickets $3 each.

The project, however, found some opposition among the members of the society. I copy the following passages from a "fly leaf" addressed by "A Member Looker-on" to the members of the Philharmonic Society, complaining of the arbitrary acts of those who compose the government:—

We work six months in the year, in the hope of realizing some few dollars at the end of the season, which some of us care not for it, but to pay for their cigars or other trifles, but which many of us

look to, to help us in the support of our families, but when the accounts of the society are summed up, we generally find that one-half, if not more, of our hard earning is gone to defray expenses, that with economical care might have been avoided or at least greatly reduced. As for the proposal of erecting a building with the denomination of the Philharmonic Hall, to which the society have too hastily but not irretrievably consented to assist, is a subject fraught with too many difficulties and penurious circumstances to be encountered, both for the present and hereafter, ever to be effected in any way advantageous to the present members of the society. If such an establishment could indeed be erected by the means mostly of gratuitous subscriptions or donations by amateurs and patrons of the art, we profess, and we join to it the produce of one or two annual festival concerts as an accumulating fund for it, *even then* a few of the present members might in *future years* derive a palpable benefit from it; but if the present members of the Philharmonic Society of New York were *to be forced by* some *quibble of the law* to become responsible for the fulfilment of the engagements that such an undertaking would require, we should all of us be *compelled by our own elected officers of the government* to work during eight or ten years to come, that but *one-tenth* perhaps of the present might enjoy the produce of this establishment hereafter, at the expense of the folly and loss of time of those gone by. There is a precedent of such a case in this country, that warns us to take example from — the Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia. (See Chap. XX.)

The concert, however, took place. Mesdames Otto and Boulard and Messieurs Munson and Meyer sang the solos in the 9th Symphony. The public, in spite of "its increasing taste," did not respond as liberally as was expected, and the members had to pay the deficit, and the Philharmonic Hall was not built.

An old member of the society, when I pointed out to him this interesting item, said: "The few well-to-do members were afraid to lose their money; the poorer ones wanted dividends, be they ever so small; a very few members offered to let the dividends remain as a nucleus

for a fund to buy a lot on Broadway, by which plan a building could easily have been erected; the venture would have been a good investment and paid good interest every year. Thus it came that the idea was given up. Musicians are not good business men."

The Philharmonic Society, during its long existence, has given its classical concerts in a number of different concert-rooms. Beginning where what is now down-town, it gradually moved up-town, following the drift of that portion of New York's population among which its regular patrons were to be found. These various rooms have been Apollo Hall, Broadway Tabernacle, Assembly Rooms, Apollo Saloon, Niblo's Concert Salon, Metropolitan Hall, Niblo's Garden, Academy of Music, Irving Hall, Steinway Hall, Metropolitan Opera House.

A glance at the programmes on another page will at once convince the reader of the high aim of the first organizers of the New-York Philharmonic Society, and the serious work they had laid down for themselves. And considering the then generally low standard of taste among the American public regarding instrumental music it must have seemed a bold undertaking to present at once some of the highest works of the great symphonic composers, and, under the circumstances, to expect an inexperienced public to respond quickly, and offer the needful support and encouragement. Any one of these programmes, especially the third of the first season, could, without hesitation, and with little change, be presented to-day to the subscribers of the New-York Philharmonic Society, and be in place, though its audiences are now, on the whole, more exacting.

At the very beginning of the society labors — the glorious Fifth! What work more appropriate, more inspiring, than this could have been selected to mark the commencement of a symphonic society, which has proved, during its long existence (long for America), a model to many other orchestral organizations; and which, sometimes prosperous, sometimes brought to the brink of financial disaster, often persecuted, conspired against, often poorly managed, injudiciously advised by timorous, prevaricating officers, repeatedly used by others as a means for grinding their private axes, has nevertheless maintained, up to our present time, its well-deserved, important artistic position among the great musical societies of the world?

The secret of the permanency which the Philharmonic Society has so far enjoyed lies in the fact that its members are all professional orchestral players, in whose hands the whole control of the society rests; the president of the society being its sole unprofessional officer. The members of the Philharmonic Society cultivate communistic principles. At the end of a season, when all the incidental expenses — such as printing, rent for house, the buying of music, advertisements, etc. — are paid, the surplus of the total receipts is equally divided among the active members. Formerly, the conductor, considering it a post of honor, went equal shares with the other members. Thus the existence of the society is not jeopardized in a financial view by good or bad seasons. If the latter happens, there is some grumbling among the players; but in spite of such occasional disappointment they keep firmly together. So far no crafty manager has succeeded in pocketing the bulk of the receipts, or has been able "to desert the concern,"

as managers have sometimes done when a musical venture has proved partially disastrous; for one reason, that the members of the Philharmonic have never needed a manager; and as long as the members of the society guard their own interests and freedom of action in every point they will be able to resist such an interested influence as a one-man's government may wish to impose on the society. In such a case the Philharmonic Society would sooner or later surely go to pieces.

The receipts of the Philharmonic Society, even in its best seasons, have never, on the whole, been large enough to offer each of the active members an adequate remuneration for his services to the society during a season. It has even often happened that, in order to attend the regular rehearsals and concerts of the society, lucrative outside engagements were given up. However, there were also periods in the history of the Philharmonic Society when members were not so scrupulous in their devotion to the society; and, instead of taking their part at some important concert, accepted another engagement that paid better, and sent a substitute in their place. Fine *ensemble* and homogeneous performances were at such times not to be expected. I believe this abuse of active membership is now remedied. The present size of the regular orchestra is about one hundred members.

Most of the eminent artists that visited America, as well as the best resident performers, have appeared at the concerts of this society. (See Chapter XIX.)

On another page the reader will find the principal works performed by the Philharmonic Society from the time of its first concert to 1880, as well as the names of the conductors.

In a previous chapter I have pointed out the different European nationalities that successively sent to the United States music-teachers and artists, both singers and instrumentalists, and the influence these foreign musicians exercised in the different cities where they settled down.

The native musician, for a long while satisfied with his psalm-tune singing-societies and musical conventions, amalgamated little with the foreigner; but progress and interest in a higher musical culture, awakened by the Italian lyrical artists, and the German instrumentalists, began to influence the more talented among native musicians. Some of them began to make successful attempts as practical musicians, as well as composers. With this awakening consciousness of his own powers, though not yet backed by serious and lasting studies, the native musician began to claim the right of access to the programmes of the concert-room, and the *repertoire* of the opera-house. He justly reasoned, that, in order to encourage the native composer to devote his time and energy to a serious culture of the difficult art of composition, he should be afforded an opportunity to have his works performed in public concerts. He thought he had something interesting to say, and thought it worth while to say it publicly to his countrymen; but, if an opera was offered to the manager of Italian opera, then the Italian opera conductor and the leading Italian opera singers shrugged their shoulders at such a request. They took a furtive glance at the "American opera," and returned the score, advising its composer to study *Il bel canto Italiano.* There is also the New-York Philharmonic Society, reasoned the native musician, established mostly by the efforts of American

band-players. The directors of this society surely will not refuse to give a hearing to an overture, a symphony, etc., by a native composer and a member of the society. But the foreign element, especially the German orchestral players, had gradually become the controlling power in the government of the Philharmonic Society; and it soon became apparent that a certain antipathy was beginning to spring up between native American and immigrated German band-players. The American native composer did not find more opportunity to have his instrumental works performed by the German Philharmonic Society, than to see his operas represented by the Italian artists at the American opera-house.

Dissatisfaction with this neglect, especially on the part of the Philharmonic Society, of American musical production, began to take a serious shape. The active American element bitterly attacked the foreign German element; and the existence of the New-York Philharmonic Society, and the good work it was doing, were for a time jeopardized. The following narrative of the pen-war that was then waged will speak for itself, and teach a certain lesson: —

This first great opposition which the Philharmonic Society encountered was in 1854, when a number of its own members, — some American, some English, musicians, — headed by G. Bristow, became dissatisfied with the course the government of the Philharmonic Society pursued regarding the making up of the programmes. Mr. Fry, the talented musical critic of "The Tribune," and a composer himself, attacked the Philharmonic Society as "anti-American," shamefully ignoring the claims of American composers. Mr. Bristow, a director of the above society, sided with Mr.

Fry, and accused the Philharmonic Society of making "a systematized effort for the extinction of American music.[1] During the eleven years the Philharmonic has been in operation in this city," says he sarcastically, "it played once, either by mistake or accident, one single American composition, — an overture of mine. As one exception makes a rule stronger, so this simple, stray fact shows that the Philharmonic Society has been as anti-American as if it had been located in London during the Revolutionary War, and composed of native English Tories. . . . Now, in the name of the nine Muses, what is the Philharmonic Society in this country? Is it to play exclusively the works of German masters, especially if they be dead, in order that our critics may translate their ready-made praises from the German? Or is it to stimulate original art on the spot? Is there a Philharmonic Society in Germany for the encouragement solely of American music?"

Though there are some grains of truth in the above remarks, yet Mr. Bristow, blinded by his antipathy towards German musicians, overlooked the fact that substitutes for those "German masters, especially if they be dead," such as Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Schubert, Mendelssohn, were then not easily to be found in America; and that he and another American composer could not very well furnish works enough to fill the programmes of the Philharmonic Society. But in his anger — that circumstances partly justified — he forgot himself entirely, and launched the following diatribe against his German colleagues: —

"It is very bad taste, to say the least, for men to bite the hands that feed them. If all their artistic affections are unalterably Ger-

[1] They could not very well extinguish that which had no existence.

man, let them pack back to Germany, and enjoy the police and bayonets and aristocratic kicks and cuffs of that land, where an artist is a serf to a nobleman, as the history of all their great composers shows. America has made the political revolution which illumines the world, while Germany is still beshrouded with a pall of feudal darkness. While America has been thus far able to do the chief things for the dignity of man, forsooth she must be denied the brains for original art, and must stand like a beggar, cap in hand, when she comes to compete with the ability of any dirty German village."

The sharp edges of this nativistic spirit are, however, gradually wearing away. Music — the cosmopolitan art *par excellence* — should certainly be the last subject to excite such prejudices.

Chamber-Music, taken in its narrow sense, comprises all those modern forms based on that of the sonata, and written for solo instruments, that is, a combination of divers instruments each one used in the manner of solo instruments, — one instrument for each separate part of the composition. We have thus duets, trios, quartets, quintets, sextets, septets, etc. The instrumental combination may consist of strings, violin, viola, 'cello, double bass ; or of wind instruments, flute, oboe, clarinet, French horn, bassoon ; or of both of these two classes of instruments mixed ; or the pianoforte in connection with one or several of those instruments.

The playing of chamber-music was from the very beginning of its cultivation a private affair of this or that princely court, or of some rich lover of music who was able to play well on the pianoforte or on some string or wood instrument. In Italy, France, Germany, England, Russia, many such admirers of this unique and refined style of music were, and are still to be found, enjoying, in company with invited friends, a pure æsthetic feast of musical beauty.

The first to introduce this style of music in this country, seem, as far as I can gather, to have been some French Royalists, who, during the great French Revolution, emigrated to America, and certain Englishmen who were professional musicians as well as finely educated musical amateurs. Mr. Samuel Johnson, one of the few living original members of the New-York Philharmonic Society, and well acquainted with its musical affairs during the last fifty years, having played violin, and especially viola parts, at concerts and at private musical parties, and also travelled with Jenny Lind, has given me some valuable information from the rich treasury of his early personal musical experiences. He tells me that as early as 1817, Mr. Berau (the father of Madame Chegary, who had a popular young ladies' school on the corner of Fifteenth Street and Fourth Avenue) had quartets and quintets performed at his house. The cultivation of chamber-music, of course, went on in a private way. Professional musicians, after their duties were over, met to play together, as an artistic recreation, trios, quartets, etc., written by the best dead and living composers. Thus Schlesinger, Kirchhoefer, and Boucher (as mentioned on a preceding page) had regular meetings; Schlesinger and Mr. Rakeman also often played, at the house of Ogden Haggerty in Chambers Street, the pianoforte parts of some of Bertini's Sextets and Hummel's Septet. Mr. Gerard, a distinguished lawyer, a great lover of good music, and an enthusiastic admirer of chamber-music, was early in the field. He was one of the first subscribers to the Philharmonic Society's concerts; he never missed a concert until near his death. About 1848, J. Pierson, the double-bass player, who lived in Leonard Street, had regular

weekly quartet meetings at his house. Mr. Henry C. Timm often played the required pianoforte parts in trios, quartets, etc.

The first attempts at public chamber-music *soirées* seem to have been those arranged in 1843, by U. C. Hill, 1st violin; Apelles, 2d violin; Lehmann, viola; Hegelund, violoncello.

Mr. Richard Grant White, who was accepted by the past generation of New York musical amateurs as an authority in musical matters, once asserted in his peremptory manner that these *soirées* "were well attended and successful." I thought at the time I read Mr. White's rose-colored description of that enterprise that such could not be the case, since neither of these players had any distinction as an executant. I will give here the appreciation of that affair on the part of Mr. Johnson, who knew well the Hill Quartet:—

"A miserable failure, artistically and financially. It would be gross flattery to call Mr. Hill a third-rate violinist; Apelles was a good clarinet, but a poor violinist; he afterwards became leader of the West Point Band; Lehmann was a good second flute; Hegelund was a bassoon player, and naturally best adapted to that instrument; he was a very small sized man, with hands too small to grasp the neck of the 'cello. The whole enterprise was dead at its conception."

Mr. Richard Grant White's ideal, regarding chamber-music performances, does not seem to have stood on a great prominence; still he was critical.

When, in 1846, Sivori, the great violinist, came here, Mr. White severely and unjustly criticised him, saying that "he was not a musician, but a tricky charlatan," etc. Sivori's Italian and other friends were indignant at this onslaught on the great artist, and in order to

show the character of Mr. White's criticism, invitations were given out to a select few of the best musicians, influential amateurs, and patrons of music, to attend, after a Sivori concert given at the Broadway Tabernacle, a private *soirée* at the Astor House, to hear Sivori play in quartet. On that memorable occasion Sivori was 1st violin; Rapetti, 2d; Poppenberg, viola (who afterwards travelled with Jenny Lind); and Boucher, violoncello. "*This was something like a real quartet,*" exclaimed my informant, "no *one*-horse affair where the 1st violin plays solo to the accompaniment of the rest, like Wilhelmj's Quartet at Steinway Hall, when, a few years ago, he visited America."

In 1849 Saroni's "Musical Times" arranged four concerts of classical music, to be given by subscription, at which the best resident artists were to appear; such as J. Burke, Th. Eisfeld, A. Boucher, Noll, F. Harbardt, Otto Dresel, Eichhorn, and others. The first took place in December, 1849, at the Apollo Rooms. The first programme besides some vocal pieces, contained Mozart's D-minor string-quartet, Beethoven's B-flat piano-trio, and Mendelssohn's D-minor piano-trio. These concerts seem to have been tolerably well patronized. They, at any rate, proved that there was a small public in New York that began to take delight in that style of music. The Saroni quartet enterprise was probably the cause of the establishment of Theodore Eisfeld's quartet *soirées*.

Theodore Eisfeld was born in 1816 at Wolfenbüttel. Karl Müller in Bremen became his master in violin-playing, and Reissiger in Dresden taught him composition. In 1848 he came to New York. In 1858, while on his return back from a visit to Europe, he was one of the very few passengers saved when the steamer

"Austria" was burnt in mid-ocean. Eisfeld was a thorough musician, a good violinist and pianist. He was conductor of the Philharmonic Society for a number of years, and also of the Harmonic Society when it was first established. He did great service to musical culture in New York, and was highly respected as a man and as an artist. In 1866 he returned to Europe and died at Wiesbaden, Sept. 16, 1882.

By the establishment of his quartet *soirées*, which he gave for a number of years, he filled a great gap in musical cultivation in New York. The first concert of the series took place at Hope Chapel, Feb. 18, 1851, when the following programme was presented: —

1. Quartet, No. 78, B-flat . . . . . *Haydn.*
2. Songs . . . . . *Mendelssohn.*
3. Trio, D-minor . . . . . *Mendelssohn.*
4. Song . . . . . *Schubert.*
5. Quartet, No. 1, F-major . . . . . *Beethoven.*

Eisfeld, Noll, Reyer, and Eichhorn composed the quartet. Mr. Otto Dresel was the pianist.

Here again was a commencement at the top of the ladder. Musical progress in New York City for the last thirty years — in fact, from 1825 up to our time: witness the first introduction of Italian opera, the first concerts of the Philharmonic Society, the above first regular series of quartet *soirées* — has been marked by a horizontal, and not an upward, direction. New musical organizations have started generally by offering the best of musical compositions, though the public at large has often protested against "too much classical music" by staying away from the public performances. The musical conscience of those musicians whose duty it was

to appear before the public could not permit them to descend to the shallow level of fashionable *salon* music; even in the face of many ever newly arriving rivals. The representatives of this latter style could not even then command a serious reputation. Their existence generally was of short duration. In spite of frequent pecuniary failures classical music, especially instrumental music, has remained the order of the day.

The Eisfeld classical *soirées* were patronized by small audiences, but made up among the most intelligent and refined class of musical amateurs. Of course, as the cultivation of chamber-music then stood, most of the compositions in this field — by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Spohr, etc. — were new to Eisfeld's audiences. The good he was thus able to do was of great importance. A desire for the performance of these beautiful compositions was awakened among many, and progress in this direction was hastened.

In the autumn of 1855, Mr. Mason suggested to the late Carl Bergmann, the conductor of the Philharmonic Society, the advisability of establishing a series of matinees, for the performance of chamber-music, and desired his co-operation in the enterprise. Mr. Bergmann heartily indorsed the idea, and stated that he was well acquainted with three young men who were enthusiastic artists, and perfectly adapted to the formation of a string quartet. They were Theodore Thomas, first violin; Joseph Mosenthal, second violin; and George Matzka, viola. The quartet was formed with these gentlemen, and with Mr. Mason as pianist, and Mr. Bergmann as violoncellist. The concerts were first known as the Mason and Bergmann series, and afterwards as the Mason and Thomas series. The first matinee was

given at Dodworth's Hall, Broadway, opposite Eleventh Street, on Nov. 27, 1855. With the exception of one season, that of 1856–57, they were continued (but as *soirées* instead of matinees) until the end of the season of 1868. The first entertainment of that last season was given on the evening of January 4, in Irving Hall.

On the 27th of November, 1860, Carl Bergmann played for the last time at a chamber-music *soirée*, and on Feb. 5, 1861, Mr. Frederick Bergner took the position of violoncellist, which he held until the chamber-music *soirées* came to an end, on April 11, 1868. The audiences then, as a matter of course, were still more select than numerous. This club has done excellent work. Besides the standard compositions of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, — Schumann, Rubinstein, Brahms, Raff, and other modern composers found a place on the programmes of those *soirées*.

Chorus Societies. — About 1844 a new musical society was formed in New York, — the "Musical Institute." In September, 1846, Haydn's "Seasons," and afterwards other oratorios, were produced. On April 11, 1848, Schumann's secular cantata, "Paradise and the Peri," was brought out by this organization. Mr. Timm was the conductor. The chorus numbered about one hundred and twenty voices, with an orchestra of sixty musicians. Schumann was very much pleased when he heard of this performance in New York.[1]

The Musical Institute also was short lived. Towards 1850 musical affairs regarding societies in New York must have offered a discouraging aspect. All the older organizations were in a most demoralized state. On Sept. 17, 1849, a meeting was held at the Coliseum

[1] See Neue Zeitschrift für Musik.

Rooms of the great body of professors and amateurs of music, to form a plan for uniting the vocal strength of the inert societies of New York: to wit, the Vocal Society, the Sacred-Music Society, and the American Musical Institute.

"We hope [says the circular] there will be full meeting, and that means will be devised to form an union upon a broad and liberal footing. If so desired an object can be accomplished, New York will have a vocal society hardly to be surpassed in Europe, and not to be approached by any city in the Union." [1]

On Monday, Sept. 24, the proposed meeting took place. The new society was ushered into the musical world under the name of the *New-York Harmonic Society*. A constitution (this was invariably looked upon as a *very* important instrument; but it never prevented a society from becoming careless of its artistic duties, or going prematurely to pieces) was adopted, and a fund of *five thousand* dollars *was* to be formed. The prospects of the new society were in every respect bright. Rehearsals were at once begun, at first under the voluntary direction of Mr. H. C. Timm. The first oratorio to be given was the "Messiah." Mr. Th. Eisfeld was elected as the permanent conductor. On the evening of May 10, 1850, the New-York Harmonic Society gave its first public performance. The work of the society seems to have been, on the whole, satisfactory to its friends and supporters. On Nov. 9, the same year, the "Messiah" was repeated, with no less a singer than Jenny Lind for the soprano solos. On

[1] These early American musical organizers always started with the purpose of "surpassing" something European, instead of being careful first to build up something of sterling artistic value capable of expansion and permanent growth. The "surpassing" will afterwards take care of itself.

June 28, 1851, Mendelssohn's "Elijah" was performed at Tripler Hall.

Regarding the scant interest New Yorkers took in the performances of oratorios at that epoch, — and, it must be said, have taken for many years since, — Saroni's "Times" [1] makes the following just remarks: —

"The audience [at the "Elijah"] was not large, though perhaps as large as is usual to be found at the performance of an oratorio. There is less attraction in a performance of this kind than in a miscellaneous concert; and, were it not for the religious feeling so frequently appealed to for the support of a society of this kind, the oratorio would soon cease from among us. Even with this aid failure to pay expenses is the rule, and profit the rare exception, as the result of the performance of oratorio in this city. . . . The oratorio does not grow in public favor in this city; and that which will draw admiring audiences in London and Germany meets with slight favor here."

The only oratorio that up to our times has been able to draw good houses is the "Messiah." There was a time when bankrupt German opera managers replenished their empty treasury by the production of the ever-popular "Freyschütz." Wagner's "Tannhäuser" now divides this favor with Weber's opera. So American oratorio societies performed the "Messiah" in order to meet the deficits caused by the production of some other oratorios. The next oratorio given was Haydn's "Seasons." To relate the detailed history of the New-York Harmonic Society during its (for a New-York choral society) rather long existence would be a repetition of things already told regarding its predecessors.

In 1863 a rival society was formed out of a number of dissatisfied members under the name of the *Mendel-*

[1] Vol. iii. 1881.

ssohn Society. The old story: it was thought a better plan, where any one society found it difficult to do efficient work, to have two, in order to give the public a double dose of inefficient work. But having two societies more men could be appointed to serve on music committees; and two positions were created for conductors, and each one had a chance of being considered the greater of the two.

It seems that the custom of performing the "Messiah" regularly on Christmas eve originated with the Harmonic Society. However discouraging musical affairs may have been during the rest of the year, when the time of the Christmas performance arrived, all the old veterans (not to say invalids) of sacred music left their private "hunting-grounds," and appeared at the last *but one* rehearsal. The performance over, "quiet again reigned on the Potomac." The custom, though presenting at times a rather monotonous appearance, must be pronounced an excellent one. But for this Christmas performance oratorio performances in New York would have had less chance of existence. This custom of the annual "Messiah" performance has since been adopted by the successors of the Harmonic Society. When the Harmonic Society so faithfully adhered to it, it was often ridiculed by those who now find excellent reasons for the continuance of such a beautiful, noble custom. If the New-York Harmonic Society had left no other traces of its existence but this of having handed that custom of a Christmas performance to its successors, it would deserve our gratitude.

Among the works performed during its existence were, beside those already mentioned, the "Creation," "Judas Maccabæus," "Samson," Neukomm's "David,"

Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise," Bristow's oratorio, "Hymn of Praise," Ritter's Forty-sixth Psalm, and (especially worthy of mention) in 1865 Bach's cantata, "Who believed, and is baptized." [1] The conductors of the Harmonic Society were H. C. Timm, Th. Eisfeld, G. F. Bristow, C. Bergmann, G. W. Morgan, F. L. Ritter, and — after the resignation of the last gentleman — J. Peck, in whose hands it softly went to sleep. The society experienced in the course of its career numerous re-organizations, but none of them could save it from final dissolution.

Its rival society, the Mendelssohn Society, lived a similar existence, and died a similar death. Bristow, Morgen, Berge, Thomas, Singer, alternately acted as conductors of this latter society.

Mr. Krehbiel, of the New-York "Tribune," asserts — on the strength of information given him by interested persons — that the old *Mendelssohn Union* entertained higher musical aims than the *Harmonic Society* from which, as a matter of historical fact, the *Mendelssohn Union* was a defection. Mr. Krehbiel is in error. There was no difference of aims, only that of activity and conductors. A number of chorus-singers, even, alternately frequented the rehearsals of both societies; there were then not enough chorus-singers in New York who took interest in oratorio work. It even happened that on some important occasions, when an oratorio was to be performed by either society, — like the "Messiah" in Christmas week, — one society sought the assistance of singers from the other. The "Messiah"

[1] Miss Emma Thursby, then one of the chorus-singers of the Harmonic Society, sang Bishop's "Echo Song" at the concert when this was performed, almost her first appearance as soloist in a concert of importance.

always brought out, from all over New York and its neighborhood, "youth and crabbed age" to swell the chorus, especially when it occurred that the soloists to appear were fine artists; all those "Messiah-volunteers" then getting free tickets for themselves and friends.

When Mr. Thomas was elected conductor of the Mendelssohn Union, his friends predicted that a revolution was about to occur in the cultivation of chorus-singing in New York. Well, Mr. Thomas could not do more, with the Mendelssohn Union not even as much, as some of his predecessors. In fact, he never succeeded, especially if he had to train the chorus himself, in doing any steady, good work with any of the New York chorus societies with which he happened to be connected as conductor. The Mendelssohn Union was not "galvanized into new activity" by this leader.

Mr. Krehbiel is also in error in asserting that Parepa-Rosa was engaged to sing in the annual (Christmas) performance of the "Messiah" as given by the Harmonic Society. The true facts are these: Parepa-Rosa having had a disagreement with Mr. Bateman, under whose management she first visited America, Mr. Lafayette F. Harrison, then the successful manager of Irving Hall, bought the contract for about $2,300. The Harmonic Society then made arrangements with Mr. Harrison to give a few oratorio performances in New York, with Parepa as soloist. Thus on Feb. 24, and again on March 4, 1867, the "Messiah" was performed, and on March 15 "Judas Maccabæus" was sung. I was then conductor of the Society. These oratorio performances were so successful that, at my suggestion and of course with my assistance, Harrison arranged a Musical Festival, commencing on June 3,

1867. The "Creation," "Elijah," "Hymn of Praise," and the "Messiah" were performed on that occasion under my conductorship; Parepa sang solos in them, and the Harmonic Society did the choruses. I have lately seen it repeatedly stated, in English and American papers, *à propos* of Carl Rosa's death, that he was the first organizer and manager of the Parepa-Rosa opera-company in America. Parepa sang in opera here before she was married to Carl Rosa. When she first was under contract with Mr. Harrison, and had proven a very successful concert-singer, he made arrangements with Maretzek, who was then giving Italian opera at the Academy of Music, for Parepa's *début* in opera in this country. The arrangement was as follows: Maretzek agreed to furnish the house, all the rest of the artists, chorus, orchestra, scenery, printing, etc., etc., for which he was to receive the first two thousand dollars at each performance, and after this Mr. Harrison was to receive one-half of the gross receipts, from which he was to pay Parepa one thousand dollars per week for four performances and to furnish her wardrobe. Parepa appeared in "Norma," "Martha," "The Barber of Seville," etc. Although this was a great risk for Mr. Harrison, his share of the receipts after the short season of opera was over, was $7,700. Afterwards Harrison organized, in connection with Maretzek and Leonard Grover, an opera-company for the production of Italian, German, and English opera. There we have the ideal cosmopolitan opera-company, to satisfy all tastes of the lovers of opera. But the immense expenses of the enterprise and the sudden illness of Parepa-Rosa broke up the company, and caused Mr. Harrison to lose a large amount of money. About

1870 Parepa-Rosa and her husband organized an opera-company to sing English operas, or operas in English. The company was composed of Parepa-Rosa, Rose Hersie, Zelda Harrison-Seguin, Campbell, Nordblom, Seguin, Laurence, and Hall. They performed "Faust," "The Trovatore," "The Marriage of Figaro," "Oberon," "Freischütz," "Lucia," "Martha," "The Bohemian Girl," "Fra Diavolo," etc. Parepa-Rosa was not a dramatic artist. When she, Santley, and Wachtel sang in "Don Giovanni" at the Academy of Music, they walked about the stage, unconscious of any need of dramatic action, and swung their arms in most conventional manner and often rather awkwardly, — worse than Brignoli. Carl Rosa attempted then to officiate as conductor, though he was not very well able to read an orchestral score. I do not know whether he learned to do so while conducting in England. Here he always conducted from a piano-score — *faute de mieux.*

Thus musical life in old Manhattanville expanded in different directions; and, although we do not yet perceive any degree of permanency in musical institutions, either professional or amateur, the spirit of music was awakened. A desire to have fine musical entertainments became stronger with every year. There still existed a good deal of confusion as to the right method to be pursued in order to establish lasting musical organizations. Progress, nevertheless, was made every year; for every new failure taught an experience by which people finally endeavored to profit. Thus all the above-mentioned musical societies, after a time of usefulness, disappeared, one after another; new ones springing up in their place, to encounter the same fate. The causes paramount in the untimely destruction of New

York's American musical societies — especially the choral societies — were many. The rapid growth of the city, incessant fluctuations among its population, — people from down-town removing gradually up-town, others across the two rivers to Brooklyn or to New Jersey, — made it difficult for members to attend rehearsals when they moved to residences too far away from the usual place of meeting. Even churches were affected by this change. The result of such frequent changes in our societies was, that at the beginning of every new season choruses would be in great part composed of new members, many inexperienced in chorus-singing. Under such circumstances it was, of course, impossible to see any society improve steadily in efficiency, strength, and experience.

Another great drawback in the way of a permanent organization of New-York musical societies was when the members began to quarrel among themselves, like fighting politicians, for no other reason than a foolish desire for power. One clique — instigated by some ambitious, half-educated solo-singer, who wished to monopolize the solo parts all through a season, or a candidate for some office (which possibly gave the incumbent some influence in the counsels of the society) — would endeavor to put out another clique that had so far managed the affairs of the society. Such an uncalled-for revolution very often thinned the ranks of the members, or, the public performances having been badly patronized, would cause a threatening deficit in the treasury; and the unwelcome prospect would suddenly have an injurious effect upon the voices of many sweet-throated members. Singing under such circumstances was at once considered a very unhealthy occupation;

and so some of the choristers found it necessary to take a vacation until the possible return of more prosperous times.

Oratorio societies then had, and will probably always have, to look for amateur singers in order to fill their ranks. There was but a comparatively small number of choristers in New York able and inclined to belong to a musical society. They went reluctantly to the study of some new difficult work. Although thousands of chorus-singers might have been formed, had the teaching of vocal music in the public schools received due attention. It was introduced late, and the method of teaching was of a desultory, slovenly character. Vocal teachers in the public schools of New York were for a long while not engaged on the strength of musical efficiency, but on that of political influence. I believe it is somewhat better now.

The former chorus-singers, for the most part, had received the little musical training they possessed during their connection with church-choirs; and for a long time the supply was not equal to the demand. Nevertheless, in spite of the above-mentioned drawbacks, all these societies contributed more or less towards musical progress; while the many extinct societies, one buried over the other, helped in forming a better and more advantageous soil for a structure that may possess the so much needed permanency. The spirit of the present body of chorus-singers seems to be broader, and more in accordance with modern musical requirements, than was the spirit prevalent among them even only ten years ago. The general musical progress springing up all through the country seems to have a salutary effect on them.

New York was, until 1850, without an appropriate, conveniently located music-hall for giving oratorio and other performances on a large scale, and in an efficient manner. Such performances had to be given in churches, which were, without exception, ill-fitted for such purposes. In summer, 1850, Tripler Hall was built (which is said to have been a capacious, fine concert-room), and opened with a concert in which Madame Anna Bishop sang. Here is the modest announcement of that event: —

OPENING OF TRIPLER HALL

By MADAME ANNA BISHOP,

WHO WILL GIVE HER THREE FIRST

GRAND CONCERTS

ON THE EVENINGS OF

THURSDAY, Oct. 17; FRIDAY, Oct. 18; SATURDAY, Oct. 19.

THIS HALL, unquestionably the most magnificent musical edifice, not only in this country, but

IN THE WHOLE WORLD,

unequalled in the grandeur of its design, the gorgeousness of its embellishments, and the arrangements,

SEATING COMFORTABLY 5,000 PERSONS,

has been constructed with special reference to the perfection of acoustic effect. In the course of these splendid entertainments prepared by MADAME ANNA BISHOP,

Choice selections of the classical and magnificent works of the *Great Masters*, and also of *deservedly popular music*, will be given on the plan of the celebrated musical performances at the

Conservatoire in Paris, the London Philharmonic, and the Great Musical Festivals in England, and Academies of Germany and Italy.

INSTRUMENTAL DEPARTMENT.

The magnitude and perfection of the vocal and instrumental arrangements for the occasion, both in respect to

Number and Talent, have never before been attempted in the ***United States.***

The violins will number no less than fifty performers.

The violas, violoncellos, and double-basses being in full proportion. The wind instruments will be quadrupled, being double the number generally used.

CHORAL DEPARTMENT,

Under the superintendence of MR. WILLIAM A. KING, organist of Grace Church, will number

TWO HUNDRED VOICES,

The whole under the sole direction of MR. BOCHSA.

Assistant director of musical affairs . . . . . HENRY C. WATSON.

TICKETS, ONE DOLLAR EACH

to all parts of the house.

This may be called a model announcement. It has been since widely imitated by many musical festival organizations throughout the country. In fact this musical period was distinguished by the sudden appearance of a bombastic, hollow, brain-and-judgment-confusing manner of announcement regarding the public appearance of great and small artists. It seems to have been grafted by unscrupulous managers on the still slender growth of American musical culture. This advertising humbug played for a long while sad havoc with the understanding and judgment of the American musical amateur. He has not yet entirely recovered from the bad effects of that treatment; and probably it will be a long while before American managers of musical enterprises have manliness and courage enough to announce things as they really are.

Even the reputation and art of a *Jenny Lind* were used as a pedestal for the advertising genius of P. T.

Barnum. The great showman, however, knew his people. The taste and judgment of his audiences could not yet be relied on in order to attract them to his Lind concerts. He knew that the great *artiste*, placed simply on her personal artistic merits, would not be understood or appreciated. He therefore created an artificial excitement in an artificial manner.

Jenny Lind appeared in New York on Sept. 10, 1850, singing at first at Castle Garden. She remained two years in the country, travelling through the States, giving concerts everywhere. Her success — due in part to her really exceptional vocal powers, in part to the anecdotes about her, true or invented, which were circulated in order to draw unmusical as well as musical people to hear and see her — is so well known, as well as are the incidents of her career in America, that I need not more than allude to this.

Tripler Hall was destroyed by fire in 1854; and New York was again without a fit music-hall until 1866, when Steinway Hall was built.

CHAPTER XV.

OPERA IN NEW YORK. — FRENCH OPERA IN NEW ORLEANS.

Operatic affairs in New York were as uncertain and vacillating in the course of this period as during the previous one. Company after company — often comprising some of the greatest living European artists — appeared. When one company could scarcely succeed in paying expenses there were at one time three in the field, every one of them a cluster of smaller orbs around a great star. Opera-house after opera-house sprung up; and each one was in its turn abandoned, with several wrecked managers behind it. To narrate in detail all the squabbles, excitements, and adventures that accompanied the different operatic enterprises, would be to fill the pages of this book with the descriptions of things that moved continually in a circle, but did not progress. I shall therefore only record that which seemed to promise something new, pointing out at the same time the appearance of some of the leading lyrical artists, and new works that were produced.

In 1843 Signor Palmo[1] built a new Italian opera-

[1] Signor Palmo has been a popular and successful restaurateur. His "Café des Mille Colonnes" in Broadway, between the hospital and Duane Street, was handsomely fitted up; and the evenings there were enlivened by various musical entertainments, vocal and instrumental. The fortune Signor Palmo had acquired he invested in Italian opera, and of course lost it. In his latter years the gentle

house in Chambers Street. It was opened in February, 1844, with "I Puritani," in which Signora Borghese, the principal singer of the company, represented Elvira. Among the other artists who appeared at this opera-house during its brief existence were Madame Cinti-Damoreau, Signora Pico, the tenors Ambognini and Benedetti, the buffo Sanquirico, the Barili family, etc.

In 1848 Palmo's Italian opera-house was abandoned. It was found too small and too far down-town for the fashionable patrons of opera. Under the name of Burton's Theatre it was afterwards devoted to theatrical representations. While operatic performances were going on at Palmo's the Seguins gave English opera at the Park Theatre, which was still the occasional battle-field of travelling opera-companies. The Seguin company produced Balfe's "Bohemian Girl" (Nov. 25, 1844) for the first time in America, and were so successful with it that it drew large audiences for a great many nights. They also gave "a grand sacred oratorio, Israel in Egypt," the music arranged from Handel and Rossini. The piece was represented on the stage with scenery. The chorus numbered fifty-five, the orchestra thirty-five pieces. The "Handel-Rossini oratorio," in this very peculiar garb, was so successful that it had a run of fifteen successive nights.

In 1843 the Italian operas "La Fille du Régiment," "Lucia di Lammermoor," "Norma," and "Gemma di Vergy," were for the first time produced in New York by a French company from New Orleans.

An energetic move was then made to have an opera-house built higher up town; for some people were

little restaurateur and opera-manager was often to be seen about the Academy of Music. Italian opera was his delight to the last.

always of the opinion that they must have Italian opera in New York *coûte que coûte.* In order to secure it a hundred and fifty gentlemen subscribed to support the Italian opera for seventy-five nights a year during a period of five years. On the strength of this subscription Messrs. Foster, Morgan, and Colles resolved to build a new opera-house in Astor Place. This new house was very elegant, and had accommodations for nearly fifteen hundred persons seated. It was opened in 1847. The opera chosen for the first night was Verdi's "Ernani," with the following singers: Signore Truffi and Marra, Signori Vietti, Avignone, Rossi, Genevossi, and Strucci. The Barilis and Pattis formed part of this company. Rapetti was the leader of the orchestra. Other operas given were Bellini's "Beatrice di Tenda," "Lucrezia Borgia," Mercadante's "Il Giuramento," Verdi's "Nabucco." The price of admission ranged from one dollar to two dollars. Nearly every season the expenses exceeded the receipts; and, after the five seasons subscribed for its support, in 1852 this house was also abandoned, and metamorphosed into the Clinton Library.

In April, 1847, New York was visited by the excellent Havana Italian-Opera Company, composed of the Signore Tedesco, Gerli, Romeri, Marini; Signori Perelli, Vita, Novelli, Bataglini, Perozzi. Fr. Badiali was the general director, and L. Arditi the leader of the orchestra. This company opened a season at the Park Theatre, after the close of which they gave some representations at Castle Garden. They sung Verdi's "Ernani" and "I due Foscari," Bellini's "Norma" and "Somnambula," Pacini's "Saffo," Rossini's "Mosé in Egitto."

English opera — that is, Italian operas sung in English — continually haunted the other New-York theatres. In the same year Mme. Anna Bishop appeared in different operas; and W. H. Reeves, a brother of the great English tenor-singer Sims Reeves, made his *début* in opera. During this season Wallace's "Maritana" was first brought out with success. Signor de Begnis, a fine Italian singer who had become a permanent resident of New York, also appeared occasionally in opera.

In 1848 Mr. Edward Fry was manager of the Astor-place Opera-House, and Max Maretzek, who had recently come over from London, was the musical director. There was a good chorus, and an efficient orchestra of about forty musicians. The company consisted of Signorine Truffi and Amaglia Patti, Mme. Laborde, Signorini Benedetti, Corsi, Valtellina, Arnoldi, Laborde, Sanquirico, Dubreuil. The operas given were "Linda," "L'Elisir d'Amore," "Lucia," "Ernani," "Norma," "Lucrezia," "Roberto Devereux" (first time).

The Havana Opera Company re-appeared during this season in New York. The celebrated contrabassist Bottesini was the musical director, with Arditi as leader. Among the new singers were Signori Morini, Lorini, and Signora Steffanone. They gave Verdi's "Attila" and "Macbeth," with "La Favorita" and some other well-known operas.

On March 19, 1849, Max Maretzek, who had been the musical director of E. Fry's company, commenced his checkered career as an *impresario* of Italian opera in New York. Most of the artists of Fry's company sung under Maretzek. "L'Elisir d'Amore," "Il Barbiere,"

"I Puritani," "Belisario," and "Ernani" were given. On Nov. 1 Maretzek commenced a new season. The opening opera was "Lucia." The members of the troupe were Signore Borghese, Bertucca, Signori Forti (first appearance), Beneventano, Parozzi, and others. The prices of admission were: $1.50 for secured seats in box and parquet; general admission, $1; amphitheatre, 25 cents. Among the operas performed were "Otello," "Maria di Rohan" (first time), "Don Pasquale," etc.

During this period opera-performances were also occasionally given at Castle Garden by the Havana troupe, under the management of Sênor Marty. Maretzek speaks in the following flattering terms of Marty's company:—

"In the summer of 1850 Marty sent to this city the greatest troupe which had ever been heard in America. Indeed, in point of the integral talent, number, and excellence of the artists composing it, it must be admitted that it has seldom been excelled in any part of the Old World. The party consisted of three *prime-donne*. There were the Signore Steffanone, Bosio, and Tedesco. The only contralto was Signora Vietti. There were three tenors, Salvi, Lettini, and Lorini. Badiali and Corradi Letti were the two baritones; while the two bassi were Marini and Coletti. At the head of this extraordinary company was Bottesini, assisted by Arditi."[1]

How insignificant beside this appear our present opera-companies with *one* "star," who has the benefit of all the receipts!

The Havana company, besides giving known operas, produced, June 24, Meyerbeer's "Huguenots" for the first time in America.

[1] Maretzek's Crotchets and Quavers.

On Oct. 21, 1850, Maretzek commenced a new season at the Astor-place house. The opening piece was Weber's "Freyschütz." Teresa Parodi made her *début* during this season. An American singer — Miss Virginia Whiting, afterwards known as Madame Lorini — also made her *début.* She was an excellent singer, with a fine method, and round and rich soprano voice, though no dramatic *artiste.* Among the new operas produced were Donizetti's "Parisina" and Strakosch's "Giovanna di Napoli." This last was not successful. During the summer Maretzek gave opera entertainments at Castle Garden.

In the course of this season Madame Anna Thillon also appeared. She made her *début* at Niblo's in Auber's "Crown Diamonds." On Nov. 1, 1852, that most popular of popular operas, Flotow's "Martha," was produced, under Bochsa's direction, for the first time in America: Lionel, Signor Guidi; Plunket, Mr. Leach; Lady Harriet, Madame Anna Bishop; Nancy, Miss Rosa Jaques. On Nov. 10, 1853, Madame Sontag appeared at Niblo's Garden in "La Fille du Regiment." Carl Eckert was the conductor. On Jan. 12 Signor Rocco, the famous buffo, stepped, for the first time, on the American operatic stage.

A musical event of no small importance took place on Feb. 11, the same year. Shakspeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," with Mendelssohn's music, was given at Burton's, and at the Broadway Theatre, and had a successful run of many nights. At Niblo's Meyerbeer's "Prophète" was given under Maretzek's direction, who afterwards went to Castle Garden, where he produced, among other operas, Verdi's "Louisa Miller" (first time), and Donizetti's "Torquato Tasso."

All these efforts and failures to render the establishment of Italian opera permanent were productive of numerous arguments on the part of those who were interested in operatic entertainments. All sorts of remedies, plans, and advice were offered, in order to solve the vexed question. Finally, it was proposed to build an opera-house capable of accommodating three times as numerous an audience as could be seated in the Astor-place Opera-House. It was also proposed to make the experiment of cheap opera. It was thought that if, in accordance with the democratic habits of the people, such an institution should be conducted on democratic principles, making the price low, and within the means of all, a larger number of people would patronize it; but in order to carry out this plan a much larger opera-house was necessary. Application was therefore made to the legislature for an Act of incorporation, which had been formerly refused.

The charter was finally granted April 10, 1852. The new building was commenced in May, 1853, and completed in 1854, at a cost of three hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars, including payment for the ground. It was opened on Oct. 2, 1854, with *Grisi* and *Mario*, who had been singing in Castle Garden.

In the charter we read that the Academy of Music was to be established "for the purpose of cultivating a taste for music by concerts, operas, and other entertainments, which shall be accessible to the public at a moderate charge; by furnishing facilities for instruction in music, and by rewards of prizes for the best musical compositions." The latter part of the charter excited the greatest expectation in the minds of American students, especially those who hoped to make the ope-

ratic stage their career. The able musical critic, W. H. Fry, in an article on the new opera-house in the "Tribune," made, among others, the following timely remarks: —

"In this view it has become an object of national consideration. . . . The expense of sustaining an opera-house so nurtured at home will be at most not more than one-fourth what it would be if the artists were brought from Europe. American vocalists would be content with some few thousand dollars a year; and if they were sought for, and educated, boarded, and lodged gratuitously the mean while, their services could be secured for several years in payment of the expenses of apprenticeship. In that way alone can the exorbitant demands of foreign artists be diminished; and the folly and extravagance of paying them from one to ten thousand dollars a night, as has been done in this city, will be forever avoided. In connection with this it may be mentioned that there are some Americans now studying for the operatic stage in Italy, and one lady of Boston has appeared in Naples with success. It may yet come to pass that art, in all its ramifications, may be as much esteemed as politics, commerce, or the military profession. The dignity of American artists lies in their hands."

Concerts, operas, and other entertainments have been given in the New-York Academy of Music, but "facilities for instruction in music" have not been furnished by the managers of that institution. Once a prize for the best musical dramatic composition was offered, but not awarded.

But in spite of the new, large house and great artists, and low, democratic prices, manager after manager went down again. Among them Ole Bull once failed in that capacity. During the fifteen months of the first three seasons five different managers vainly tried to make operatic representations in the new Academy of Music successful in an artistic and financial way. The press came to the rescue, and gave its opinions. One writer

proposed this, the other that; but the most reasonable view of the subject was given by the "New-York Courier and Enquirer,"—

"First-rate performances, at low prices, are called for, that the support of the 'mass of the people' may be obtained, and the establishment of the Italian opera in New York be thus secured. Those who make this demand and this promise must be deplorably ignorant or wilfully perverse. They generally point to what they are pleased to call successful seasons at Castle Garden in support of their vague clamor; but they ought to know — and, if they do not know, we will tell them upon authentic information — that there never was a peculiarly successful season of Italian opera in this city; and, more, that there never was a successful season of Italian opera anywhere. And we add, that the season at the academy last year was eminently unsuccessful, in spite of crowded houses; and the only season which forms the exception to which we had alluded was one at Astor Place, when, according to the *impresario's* (Maretzek) own confession, the company was the weakest we have had for many years; the large receipts having been entirely owing to the fact that the season happened to be one when there were few or no parties or balls among those who were attendants at the opera, when there was no other entertainment of any kind suited to their tastes, and when, therefore, the opera-house became a place of tri-weekly re-union, and more fashionable than it ever was before or has since been, — the price of tickets being $1.50 to all the parts of the house except the amphitheatre."

Italian opera is a luxury which the mass of the people do not want to buy, and for which those who wish to enjoy it must pay accordingly.

When Ole Bull was opera-manager of the Academy of Music, January, 1855, he issued the following official announcement, offering a prize of one thousand dollars for the best opera by an American composer:—

"To American Composers.

"The undersigned, lessee and manager of the Academy of Music, desiring to carry out both the letter and the spirit of the

charter granted by the State legislature to the above establishment, has determined, as far as is in his power, to make the Academy of Music not alone a home of refined and intellectual amusement, where all classes of our citizens may resort with comfort, but also an *academy in reality*, whose principal object shall be the encouragement, the development, and elevation of American art and artists.

"A general change in the mode of managing this establishment will necessarily take place, and all the efforts of the new direction will tend towards the final realization of the above-mentioned object.

"In furtherance of this object, and as an earnest mark of the sincerity of the intention, among other important resolutions adopted and to be hereafter published, the manager takes pleasure in announcing that it has been decided to offer for honorable competition a prize of one thousand dollars for the best original grand opera, by an American composer, and upon a strictly *American subject*.

"The national history of America is rich in themes both for the poet and musician; and it is to be hoped that this offer will bring to light the musical talent now latent in the country, which only needs a favorable opportunity for its development."

Then follow the usual conditions of competition, and a passage regarding musical instruction, which says, —

"The advanced period of the musical season renders it impossible to commence operations at the Academy of Music, as an academy or conservatorio, until the autumn, 1855. The conditions of scholarship, and the course of musical professional education, will be announced early in spring."

This document is signed by Ole Bull, lessee and manager.

But poor Ole Bull, no doubt sincerely in earnest about all this, was not manager long enough to carry out such a noble task; for on March 5, 1855, he published the following short announcement: "In con-

sequence of insuperable difficulties the Academy of Music is closed."

The original grand American opera, to be awarded one thousand dollars by the Academy of Music, never saw the light; and the Conservatorio of the Academy of Music has never yet opened its doors to any professional scholars whatever.

After the sudden collapse of the Ole Bull management opera-performances were continued for a while, managed by a committee of stockholders, Max Maretzek acting as conductor. Steffanone, Vestvali, Badiali, Brignoli, were the principal artists of the company.

In the same year a season of twelve nights of German opera was arranged at Niblo's, of which Mlle. Lehman, a distinguished German singer, was the star. "Martha," "Der Freyschütz," Adam's "The Brewer of Preston," Lortzing's "Czar und Zimmermann," etc., were given. Mr. Unger was the musical director.

At the Academy of Music Maretzek produced Rossini's "William Tell" in a more complete form than ever given before in New York. On the 30th of April Verdi's "Il Trovatore" was produced for the first time at the Academy of Music, with the following cast: Steffanone, Leonora; Vestvali, Azucena; Brignoli, Trovatore; Amodio, the Count; Rocco, Fernando.

In May the Lagrange company appeared at Niblo's.

English operas were given in 1854 by the Louisa Pyne and Harrison troupe. Though they were not presented in a continuous manner, there was no lack of operatic enterprise.

In fall, 1855, a season of forty nights was announced at the Academy of Music under the management of

Mr. Payne. Lagrange, Hensler, Brignoli, Amodio, and others belonged to the company.

In fall, 1856, Maretzek opened the Academy of Music. The company consisted principally of the above artists.

At the same time Mlle. Johansen made her *début* in German opera in New York. During her American opera career this singer did much good work. Carl Bergmann was the conductor of this German company.

Maretzek soon fell out again with the proprietors of the Academy of Music, and in November went to Boston. On Dec. 29 Beethoven's "Fidelio" was given for the first time entire by the German company, Johansen in the title *rôle.*

In January Strakosch appeared in the operatic field, and opened a season of Italian opera at the Academy of Music. The company was a poor one. Maretzek meanwhile travelled with his company through the States.

In March Maretzek re-appeared in New York, and took up his stand at Niblo's. Neither of the companies was a strong one, though Maretzek's was the best. Gazzaniga, Adelaide Phillips, Brignoli, and Amodio belonged to this troupe. Of course the situation — Strakosch against Maretzek — created a good deal of excitement among the opera-goers; but lyrical art did not gain much by it.

During all this time the Pyne and Harrison troupe made excursions through the States, giving alternately concerts and operas. In fall, 1857, Messrs. Strakosch and Ullmann opened the Academy of Music, with "La Sonnambula," Madame Frezzolini as prima donna, and Gassier the baritone. Carl Anschütz was the conductor

of the company. Later, beginning of December, the basso Carl Formes made his *début* on the same stage in "Robert Le Diable." Madame D'Angri, the contralto, also appeared in opera during the same season. Ullmann managed to make his opera season a comparatively brilliant one. Among the great operas he produced was Meyerbeer's "Les Huguenots," but no novelties. The great buffo Ronconi also appeared then for the first time on the American lyrical stage, having been a member of the Maretzek company.

Ullmann held his own at the academy. On March 29 an opera by a native American composer — "Leonora," by W. H. Fry — was produced at the academy under the conductorship of Carl Auschütz.

One of the most interesting figures among native American musicians was *William Henry Fry*, the composer and journalist, born in Philadelphia, Aug. 10, 1813. He received a fine general education, but his musical talent became apparent while he was yet quite young. He taught himself to play on the pianoforte from listening to instruction on that instrument given to an older brother. Afterwards his musical studies were directed by the best masters then to be found in his native city. Mr. L. Meignen, a pupil of the Paris Conservatoire, taught him harmony and counterpoint. When yet a young man he tried his hand in the different styles of composition, both vocal and instrumental, also in opera; but all these early efforts, though creditable to the young composer, had only temporary success. But in 1845 he came forward with a more pretentious work, the opera "Leonora," which was first produced in Philadelphia by the Seguin troupe, and afterwards at the New-York Academy of Music, with

Mesdames Lagrange and D'Angri, and Messrs. Tiberini, Gassier, and Rocco, in the principal parts. His next opera was "Notre Dame de Paris" (the libretto by his brother J. R. Fry), produced at Philadelphia a few months before the composer's death. The operas of Fry were in the form of the French grand opera; the cantilena, according to Italian models; the *ensemble*, orchestration, and dramatic arrangement, according to French tradition. Besides these lyrico-dramatic labors, Mr. Fry composed several symphonies, — "Santa Claus, or the Christmas Symphony," "The Breaking Heart," "Childe Harold," and "A Day in the Country," — produced by Jullien at New York. He also composed many songs, several cantatas, and a Stabat Mater. In 1852 he gave ten lectures on music at the Metropolitan Hall in New York. These lectures were destined to illustrate the rise and progress of the present state of music in all its different styles. All these musical labors would seem to have been sufficient for the strength of one man. In Mr. Fry's case they were only the fruits of leisure hours. He was a professional journalist, taking an active part in the absorbing political life of his country. He wrote numerous political, economical articles for the press, made political campaign speeches, and was musical critic of "The Tribune." His musical imagination was a rich one, and he was well equipped as a practical composer. Lack of time and repose sufficient for the full working out of his original ideas, and absence of frequent opportunities of having his efforts brought out, were the reasons that prevented a ripe development of his fine natural powers. His bright, terse, characteristic musical criticisms and lectures, even when deviating from the ac-

cepted code of æsthetics, stimulated musical intellectual life and cultivation. His death was a serious loss to American musical development. He died at Santa Cruz, Sept. 21, 1864.

But to return to my former subject, — the opera. Maretzek staid in Philadelphia with his company, abiding his time. In May the company went to pieces; and fragments of the organization, Ronconi, Lagrange, Tiberini, and Coletti, went to New York to give a few opera-performances at Burton's Theatre.

The operatic sky became cloudy. Ullmann threatened to go to Philadelphia; Maretzek re-appeared at the New-York Academy of Music; Ullmann went to Europe to prepare for the next fall season.

In August Maretzek opened the opera season at the Academy of Music; while Strakosch and Madame Colson, Amodio, Brignoli, Labocetto, and Junca began a short season at Burton's Theatre. War to the knife between the two *impresarii*. Great excitement in the operatic world. Strakosch went to Boston; Maretzek closed at the Academy, and went to Havana; Ullmann, Oct. 20, stepped in with the charming little Piccolomini. The *répertoire* of the three companies was pretty much the same: "Trovatore," "Traviata," "Martha," "William Tell," "Marriage of Figaro," etc.

In spring, 1859, all three companies made tours through the States. New York was without an opera.

One bold stroke must be recorded here. On the 4th of April Carl Bergmann produced, at the Stadt Theatre, Wagner's "Tannhäuser," for the first time in America, in a most acceptable manner: Mme. Siedenberg, Elisabeth; Pickaneser, Tannhäuser; Lehmann, Wolfram. The chorus was furnished by the Arion Society.

In the fall of the year Strakosch opened the Academy of Music with Donizetti's "Poliuto;" the company composed of Cortesi, Gassier, Brignoli, Stefani, Patti-Strakosch, and Junca. Maretzek was the conductor.

Oct. 12 Ullmann opened a new season at the academy; on Nov. 21 Mozart's "Zauberflöte" was produced; on Nov. 24 Adelina Patti made her *début* in "Lucia." This great lyrical *artiste* has since that time filled the musical world with her fame. I think it useless to dwell on it here, as the press of the two hemispheres continually keep the public informed as to her movements and operatic performances.

Maretzek had gone with his company to Havana; and Ullmann, after the close of his New-York season, visited Boston and Philadelphia.

At the beginning of April the two companies, marshalled respectively by Maretzek and Ullmann, re-appeared simultaneously in New York; Ullmann at the Academy of Music, Maretzek at the Winter Garden. Lively times were again in store for New-York operatic amateurs.

On April 31 Halevy's "La Juive" was produced by Maretzek for the first time at the Winter Garden; and later Verdi's "Nabucco" was revived. Both houses did bad business. End of May the seasons of both companies closed; and Madame Cortesi gathered the fragments under her own management, and went travelling through the States until she became "sick."

On the 3d of September Ullmann-Strakosch reopened the Academy of Music. Maretzek was gained as musical director. During the season "La Traviata," "Il Trovatore," "La Somnambula," "Linda," "Don Giovanni," "Robert le Diable," "Nabucco," "Martha,"

"Norma," "Il Barbiere," "Il Polinto," and "I Puritani" — all old friends — were given.

After this season Ullmann, with a company of which Fabbri, Stigelli, and Formes made part, gave a short season of operas, a very short one indeed: it consisted of two nights only.

Thus ended the operatic affairs connected with this period of my narrative.

French Opera in New Orleans. — I resume my previous narrative of the career of French opera in New Orleans. Every winter some fine French company of lyrical artists engaged in Paris brought out all the most interesting works of the Paris *répertoire* on the stage of the Southern capital. At different times in the course of this historical study I have had occasion to mention visits which the New-Orleans opera-companies made to New York, generally in spring and summer, on their return from New Orleans to Paris. The following extract from a Southern newspaper will give an idea of the lively musical enjoyment which rich Southern planters derived from their winter sojourn at the then gay, half-French, half-Creole Crescent City,[1] previous to the Civil War. It will be seen, however, that their operatic joys were interspersed with characteristic episodes of a less harmonious nature.

"In winter nearly all the rich planters of Louisiana and Mississippi brought their families to New Orleans, and lived at the St. Louis and St. Charles Hotels. The French Opera-House was packed every evening with beautiful women, resplendent with dress and diamonds, and accompanied by husbands, brothers, fathers, and lovers, — a gay throng, with an average of two duels to every opera night. Three evenings in the week, after the opera,

[1] As depicted by G. W. Cable, in his charming sketches, "Old Creole Days," and other novels.

an immense swinging floor was let down over the parquet, and dancing was kept up until dawn. Such was the state of the society at the time, that it was the universal custom at the most select balls and parties to require every gentleman to be searched for concealed weapons in the dressing-room before entering the ball-room."

The Theatre d'Orleans was remodelled in 1845, and at the same time it was beautified; and, although it had a very large number of boxes, it would seat 1,344 persons. To record the doings of the French opera singers who appeared at the Theatre d'Orleans, from its erection in 1813, to its second destruction by fire, and final extinction, on the 7th of December, 1866, would require a large volume.

In March, 1859, Mr. Boudousquié formed the New-Orleans Opera-House Association, which erected a new edifice at the corner of Bourbon and Toulouse Streets. This new French opera-house, still standing, was completed and opened Dec. 1, 1859, under the management of Mr. Boudousquié. The opera selected for the occasion was "William Tell." The company, on the whole, was a fine one; and many grand operas were well rendered during the winter season. The opera rose to the apex of its fame during the two seasons immediately preceding the war of Secession, and a glorious record of half a century was completed, — to its honor.

New Orleans was the first city in the Union to introduce, and firmly establish, regular seasons of opera, the mark at once of a high civilization and a love of musical art not to be simulated; but the old Creole days are ended. The stately dames, the courtly old gentlemen, the giddily polite youths, and the bewitching

demoiselles, whose dark flashing eyes outshone lustrous diamonds, decked ever in elegant toilets, — all, one and all, have departed from the scene, never to return again. Since the war the opera has shone with fitful splendor, but at all times with disastrous pecuniary consequences to the several managers who have honestly tried to revive its ancient fame. The career of French opera in New Orleans now became similar to that in New York. So far it has never again reached a permanent basis. Mr. Parlange tried a season of opera in the old Theatre d'Orleans in 1859–60 in rivalry with the new opera, but with disastrous consequences ; and the old house that had witnessed the triumphs of Damoreau, and other great lights of the Parisian lyrical stage, fell into disuse from lack of patronage. The massive, but antiquated and roach-infested house was found to be no match for the large and beautiful new structure on Bourbon Street, that had been built according to the modern style of opera-houses in Europe.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ORATORIO AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN BOSTON.

In Boston the Handel and Haydn Society labored with varying success, and many disagreeable experiences; but, on the whole, it kept its own conquered ground well, in spite of opposition on the part of rival societies. In May, 1857, a musical festival on a grand scale, similar to the great English musical festivals, was arranged. This new departure on the part of the old society brought numerous recruits to its ranks. The chorus for the three days' festival was increased to five hundred voices. An orchestra of seventy-eight instrumentalists played the accompaniments and important symphonic works. The best available solo-singers were engaged. Three great oratorios — the "Creation," "Elijah," and the "Messiah" — formed the *pièces de résistance.* Three afternoon concerts were given, in which the following pieces were performed: Beethoven's fifth and seventh symphonies, and his overtures to "Coriolanus" and "Leonora" (No. 3), and the *scherzo* from the eighth symphony; Mendelssohn's *scherzo* from the Scotch symphony, and the Fingal's Cave overture; Weber's "Euryanthe" overture and his Concert stück; Wagner's "Tannhäuser" overture, and the March from "Lohengrin;" Rossini's "William Tell" overture; a violin concerto by Vieuxtemps; arias by Bel-

lini, Donizetti, Mercadante, DeBeriot, and Gluck. The festival proved a great artistic success, and helped to advance the cause of musical art through all New England: nay, it roused the spirit of oratorio music through all the Union. The friends of the society became, if possible, more earnestly devoted to the welfare of the society. The wavering, indifferent members became more reliable in their support of it. Many were drawn into the current of the best class of music who formerly drew back, and had little faith in musical culture. But, above all, the society gathered confidence in its own resources and strength. Financially, the festival was a failure; but in the face of the achieved fine artistic triumph the guarantors stepped cheerfully forward, and willingly paid the deficit. The great problem was solved, that American musical societies, if in real earnest, were able, and had the means, to arrange great musical festivals.

Mr. Dwight, after this first Boston musical festival, made the following just remarks:[1] —

"For the first time almost in our country has an artistic demonstration here been made, and carried through, upon a grand scale, without false promise, vain show, or *humbug*. The best thing, the most hopeful thing, about it is, that it has all been *honest*. Nothing of artistic integrity and value has been sacrificed to mere money-making views. They who undertook it of course hoped to succeed, but they were more anxious to do a good thing. They were not so eager to advertise it, to excite great expectations of what should be done, as they were to *do* it, and to do the best that could be done. Every promise has been kept to the letter and the spirit. . . . The managers have done themselves all honor in the premises. They have their reward in the wholesome feeling which attaches to their festival, in the conviction now created of

[1] "Dwight's Journal of Music."

its genuineness, and in the certainty that such sound seed so planted shall surely spring up to abundant harvest in the future. There will be more festivals. They will become an institution in the land."

This has proved true. The Handel and Haydn Society has its triennial festivals; and since a few years ago the musical festival spirit, as awakened by the old Boston society, seems to hover over the whole Union.

Since the erection of the fine Boston Music Hall (1852), with its glorious organ, which afterwards was just as ingloriously neglected, the Handel and Haydn Society has had a commodious hall to give its performances with the best effect. Its chorus-ranks are well filled. New and important works are yearly added to the general *répertoire.*

The Harvard Musical Association. — There is no doubt that the members of the Harvard Musical Association, true to their self-imposed task, began their labor of love in earnest, and with real zeal. Every year at their annual meeting they gathered and compared notes regarding the progress of higher musical culture. Several addresses delivered at some of those meetings by such men as J. S. Dwight, Ch. P. Cranch, W. W. Story, lie before me; and it is interesting to observe the progress of the musical cause in Boston, to which they allude.

In one by Mr. Dwight, for 1841, he still finds reason to complain that —

"There are many things with us to weaken the force of any appeal which music, through the performance of her sublimest works, might make. To say nothing of our comparatively few opportunities of hearing music of the highest kind, and worthily performed; of the neglect of a general cultivation, not only of a

taste, but even of an ear for music, — there is the want of sufficient reverence for music as an art, which prevents and makes impossible any full and effectual manifestation of its power among us."

Here is a passage from Cranch's address (1845), which gives a graphic picture of the musical situation at that time. These men had the courage and true patriotism to point out to their countrymen the weakness of their claims to being called at that time a musical people.

"We must all agree that in the science and art of music we Americans are as yet scarcely pupils, and, of course, far enough from being masters. Our lamentable ignorance in the scientific principles of music, as well as our want of delicate susceptibility to the best works of musical composers, renders all comparison of ourselves with Germany, Italy, and other countries of Europe, altogether unnecessary. We are, in fact, barely beginning to wake up as from a lethargy, and join in sympathy with the great musical culture on the other side of the Atlantic. Take the most cultivated and refined population of cities like Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and it will be seen that, even in the most crowded houses which a celebrated performer or a celebrated work will attract, the proportion of those who really appreciate the music is very small. Where thousands rush in to enjoy a novelty, or while away time, or at best have their ears tickled by imitations of bagpipes and flageolets on the violin, or to hear a singer tax invention and strength of lungs and flexibility of larynx to produce a cadenza more crowded with notes and of longer duration than ordinary, there may perhaps be a hundred who go with a simple, hearty love, and a cultivated taste, for the composer's works. . . . Men and women, and young misses at school, who have pianofortes of their own, and all the songs of Russell, Dempster, and the Hutchinsons on the tips of their tongues, set themselves up as the critics of Handel and Beethoven, and talk and yawn and go out in the midst of their sublimest choruses or symphonies. If they, perchance, ascend to the level of the popular opera-songs, their old fathers or mothers find themselves a good deal mystified in the attempt to follow them; so that, unless encouraged to persevere,

they lose their faith in even Auber, Bellini, and Donizetti, and fall back like sceptics upon Balfe or Knight, or perhaps even the popular author of the 'Old Arm-chair,' and the rest of his sect." [1]

But the members of the Harvard Musical Association were not alone satisfied to point out the weak spots of musical culture as then prevalent in America. They encouraged, as far as their personal influence went, every honest effort to perform good music. They themselves organized during the winter classical chamber-concerts. They coutributed by word and deed towards a better state of musical culture. Musical progress in many directions began to be noticed. In 1852 Mr. J. S. Dwight, one of the most enthusiastic and active members of the association, resolved to establish a musical journal that should serve as the worthy, honest organ of the new important musical movement throughout the country; in fact, an organ that would help to awaken and stimulate a higher musical taste and culture, not alone among the inhabitants of Boston, but also among those in other cities of the Union. On April 10, the same year, the paper appeared, under the title of "Dwight's Journal of Music," and was at once distinguished by a lofty aim, and highly artistic purpose.

"Our motive [says the editor] for publishing a musical journal lies in the fact that music has made such rapid progress here within the last fifteen, and even ten years. Boston has its thousands of young people, who go regularly to hear all good performances of the best classic models of this art. Its rudiments are taught in all our schools. The daughters of not the wealthy only pursue it into the higher branches, and music-teachers count up well amid

[1] My candid reader must confess that much of this picture can yet be justly applied, in a great measure, to our present situation.

the other industrial categories. Think of the fifteen hundred people listening every week to orchestral rehearsals of the symphonies and overtures!"

The musical situation in Boston had materially changed since the last ten years. Boston became for a while the musical centre of the Union.[1] All this must have seemed very encouraging progress to the members of the Harvard Musical Association. The only drawback with regard to regular orchestral concerts was the want of a permanent orchestra. The concerts of the orchestral bands had to be given in the afternoon, orchestral musicians being almost all engaged during their evenings in the different theatres. In the next period we shall see that an important step was taken by the Harvard Musical Association in the direction of organizing regular symphonic concerts during the winter season.

Those students of Harvard College who afterwards organized themselves into the Harvard Musical Association must have had an exceptional love and admiration for the highest class of music. I find in the report mentioned above the following passage, which bears upon the present subject: —

"It is by some thought advisable to add to the interest of future meetings of academic concerts of music to be held in the presence of the sodality and their friends, . . . the performers on that occasion to be members of the sodality. . . . Let our annual day of meeting be a sort of *musical* exchange, where individuals may confer together, and organize themselves into little parties to practise during the year various kinds of music; some to play quartets, trios; some to sing glees; others to cultivate sacred music, etc."

[1] A number of cities, both East and West, have since claimed the distinctive title of "great American musical centres." But, if these musical centres continue to multiply at such a rate, the circumference of each will become rather limited.

This musical exchange among the young friends led them a step farther. They engaged the best available artists to give a series of chamber-music *soirées*, first at Cambridge, then afterwards, in a more public way, at Boston, 1844 and 1850. A series of eight was led by the violinist Herwig, and another series by C. Hohnstock. Messrs. Lange, W. Mason, L. Rackemann, and others alternately presided at the piano in some of these *soirées*. Thus the Harvard Musical Association also gave in the city of Boston the first serious impulse to the cultivation of an important branch of musical art, — chamber-music.

The desire to hear and enjoy the performance of those exquisite creations by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, once awakened among refined musical amateurs, — of whom the members of the Harvard Musical Association formed the nucleus, — induced professional musicians to organize quartet and trio clubs. In the winter, 1849–50, such an organization for the exclusive cultivation of chamber-music made its appearance in Boston under the name of the Mendelssohn Quintet Club, — still existing, and laboring for the same good cause.

The formation of this club for public performances was the result of a chance suggestion. The original members used to meet for private practice and enjoyment of chamber-music, when a lover of classical music pointed out to them the great benefit they might confer on many musical amateurs by giving public performances. Acting up to this suggestion they gave their first public concert at Boston in the piano-rooms of Jonas Chickering, Dec. 4, 1849, when the following programme was presented: —

1. Quintet, op. 8 . . . . . *Mendelssohn.*
2. Solo, Violin, "La Mélancolie" . . . . *Prume.*

3. Concertant for flute, violin, and cello . . . *Kalliwoda.*
4. Concert for clarinet . . . . . *Berr.*
5. Quintet, op. 4 . . . . . *Beethoven.*

The five original members of the club were, —

August Fries, first violin.
Francis Riha, second violin.
Edward Lehman, viola and flute.
Thomas Ryan, viola and clarionet.
Wulf Fries, violoncello.

This was at the outset a strong combination for high artistic work of all styles. By reason of its small numbers the club has been able to visit small towns in remote sections of the country, as well as larger cities; thus helping to plant everywhere the seed of good musical taste. During its long existence changes in the membership took place. Thus after the first year Riha retired, and was replaced by Carl Meisel; and, later, August Fries was replaced by William Schultze. During its long existence the Mendelssohn Quintet Club has kept pace with musical progress. Every work of merit that came within its province has been presented; and other instruments have been called in from time to time to aid in giving the larger works of chamber-music, such as sextets, septets, octets, and nonets.

Among the foreign musicians who have exercised much influence among the best circles of Boston was Mr. Otto Dresel, who, in 1852, settled in the New-England capital as a piano-teacher, and gave pianoforte recitals every season. His *répertoire* was composed of the most interesting works of pianoforte literature, while sometimes he varied his programmes by the introduction of piano trios, quartets, and quintets.

CHAPTER XVII.

TRAVELLING ORCHESTRAS.

Towards 1840 small orchestral bands, as well as the once much admired Tyrolese and Swiss singers and bell-ringers, began to visit the United States. In 1839 "The Comet," a Sicilian band of instrumentalists, appeared in New York, and afterwards visited the principal cities of the Union. In 1840 the Tyrolese singers, the Rainers, sung with their fine voices their Ländler, Tyrolean waltzes, and jodels, to the delight of everybody. In 1846 the Steiermarkers came to the United States. This was a band composed of eighteen performers under the leadership of an able orchestral musician, Riha, first violin. They played the only style of music that was then admired, such as dance-tunes and popular operatic airs and light overtures. Among their *pièces de résistance*, Gungl's "Railroad Galop" was the most called for. These Steiermarkers, though a good band, were, on the whole, not very successful. They travelled for a few seasons, and then dissolved. Their leader, Riha, afterwards became a member of the Boston Mendelssohn Quintet Club. In 1849 Gungl himself came over with a fine band. He remained in the United States but one season, and it was not a successful one. Here are portions of a letter written to a German paper, in which Gungl gives

his estimate of the musical situation in the United States at the time of his visit. This characteristic critique appeared in the "Neue Berliner Musikzeitung," Feb. 4, 1849, and was afterwards translated by Mr. Dwight for his journal: —

"At length I will undertake to inform you how it really is with Madame Musica in America. True, I did this superficially in my last; but to-day I will go into the matter thoroughly. As I told you before, the above-mentioned dame lies still in the cradle here, and nourishes herself on sugar-teats. How muchsoever the American, as a business-man, perhaps surpasses most European nations, just so much, perhaps, in all departments of the fine arts — but especially in music — is he behind all, and is therefore not capable of enjoying instrumental music. It is a matter of course, that only the so-called anti-classical music can in any degree suit the taste of an American public; such as waltzes, galops, quadrilles, above all polkas. That there are exceptions, I cannot deny; but only a few — a very few.

"There is no want of virtuosos here, thanks to Europe, so rich in that class. During my three months' residence here, the following have arrived: 1st, the Hohnstocks, brother and sister, from Brunswick (piano and violin). Made nothing, completely fallen through; both rather good. 2d, Hatton, pianist from London, very capable; fallen through totally. 3d, Ingleheimer from Germany; compared with his deserts, completely fallen through; his instrument, violin. 4th, a young Englishman, his name I do not at this moment recall; piano, very good; passed away leaving no trace. 5th, Coehnen, violinist from Holland; remarkably good; played to empty benches. 6th, Dresel, pianist, I believe from Saxony; he will not gain the treasures of the Indies in America. 7th, a Madame Goria Bothe, who wishes to make the Yankees believe that she is a prima donna at the Royal Opera in Berlin; sings like a jay, and gets applause in proportion. . . . She sings worse than a watchman; and whoever would take the much-talked-of Goria Bothe, after the first note of her screeching, for prima donna of the Berlin opera, must be a Chinese, a Hottentot, or an Esquimau. A Madame Bishop, Englishwoman, much better than the last, is travelling about in the United States with Bochsa, the

old virtuoso on the harp, and understands how to operate on the Americans. She understands Hombock (humbug), and contrives once in a while to excite their emotions and feelings even down to their purses. . . . But then she had to exhibit a little as a comedian. First she appeared as Anna Bolena, with dishevelled hair; then as Norma (without children, though); and, lastly, as the Daughter of the Regiment, with a drum, and a little tobacco-pipe stuck in her hat. The art-loving, discerning public applauded bravely; and it seemed to me that the tobacco-pipe most especially called forth the enormous applause. If I find I cannot make it go, I know what I will do: I will take also to the tobacco-pipe.

"Henry Herz has been here some time, and has had an excellent concert. Besides that, during his stay in Boston he gave a second, and that in connection with a pianist by the name of Strakosch, at which there were not many hearers. Strakosch, as a pianist, is worthy to be placed by the side of the much-talked-of songstress Goria Bothe. He has been for three-fourths of a year in the United States; calls himself a pianist of the very first rank."

Gungl then mentions the New-York Philharmonic Society, which, considering the strength of the orchestra, play "pretty well." The Italian opera, then under the management of Mr. E. Fry, is considered "at least as good as that troupe which visits Berlin every winter. But the so-called 'minstrels' have the best business here. The companies are composed commonly of six or seven individuals of the masculine gender. They paint their faces black, sing negro songs, dance and jump about as if possessed, change their costumes three or four times each evening, beat each other to the great delight of the art-appreciating public, and thus earn not only well-deserved fame, but enormous sums of money. I am of the opinion that they look upon the latter as worth more than all the rest. Circus-riders, rope-dancers, beast-tamers, giants, dwarfs, and the like are in such numbers that they may surely be reckoned as

forming a certain percentage of the population," etc. This, Josef Gungl thinks, "is fully sufficient to give you light in some degree as to the taste for art of the American public." I wonder what he would think of it now, were he able to take a glance at its present condition!

After Gungl's visit, came the "Saxonia" orchestra, under Carl Echardt; then the "Lombardi," under August Fries. None of these bands remained together for any length of time. After their disbandment some of the members either settled in Boston or in New York: others chose some Western city. Every one of these travelling troupes contributed their mite towards the creation of a taste for instrumental music. The pieces they played — and generally played very well — were not much beyond the understanding of the musically inexperienced citizens of this rising republic.

The most important among these travelling orchestras, and that which remained longest together, was the "Germania Orchestra." The nucleus of the orchestral organization was formed from Gungl's Berlin orchestra. To those members were added others of equal culture; and as they were nearly all young men, and personal friends, they had thus, at the outset, a combination of interests which secured their unity of purpose and effort during many years. The Germania was originally composed of twenty-four members, but during the six years of its existence several changes took place. In July, 1850, after the retirement of Lenschow, Carl Bergmann became conductor, a position he filled until the time of the disbandment of the society. An important feature of the Germania was that a soloist for every instrument was to be found in the orchestra. On the

28th of September, 1848, the Germanians landed in New York, and on the 5th of October gave their first concert in America at the Astor-place Opera-House; and, from the 9th October to the 15th November, they gave sixteen concerts at the Tabernacle, and four in Brooklyn. Though this series of concerts excited much interest among New-York music-lovers, its pecuniary results were discouraging: the expenses were often greater than the receipts. The brave musicians may well have asked themselves, If, at the outset of our American tour, the metropolis can hold out to us no better pecuniary compensation for our artistic labors, what encouragement will be in store for us when we visit other cities, where musical culture is of a still lower grade? At this point of hope and doubt, the members of the New-York Philharmonic Society, and a number of the best amateurs, tendered them a complimentary benefit concert. The house was crowded; the performances of the different pieces were received with enthusiastic applause, and the great success of the concert served to revive the drooping spirits of the Germanians. From New York they went to Philadelphia, on the invitation of a gentleman from that city who had heard them play in New York. I will copy from the Germania article in "Scribner's Magazine" for November, 1875, their sad experience at the Quaker City, —

"The first performance in Philadelphia took place on the afternoon of Dec. 4: artistic success, immense; pecuniary success, infinitesimal. Four concerts were given at the Musical Fund Hall; and the losses at each were so serious, that, to lessen the expenses, the much smaller hall of the Chinese Museum was engaged. Two more concerts followed in that locality; and still, when the poor fel-

lows undertook to figure up the results, the only figures that stared them in the face were ciphers.

"In a moment of desperation they abandoned the Musical Fund, hired a melancholy room, then known as Arch-street Hall, and advertised a series of promenade concerts, to begin on Jan. 1, 1849. The rent of this spacious and imposing structure was to be ten dollars per night; and on this eventful New-Year's evening, after waiting patiently for the most persistent late-comer to arrive, the receipts amounted to nine dollars and a half. In the middle of the concert, the worthy proprietor of the hall — taking advantage, perhaps, of the title given to the entertainments — himself appeared on the 'promenade,' and announced to the unhappy musicians that unless the ten dollars' rent was forthcoming, then and there, he would turn off the gas. The despairing members one and all, with the utmost possible promptness and unanimity, desired him to 'turn it off;' and so ended the first and last of the 'promenade concerts.'"

The situation of the Germanians was, at this stage of their American tour, a desperate one: they were out of money, and out of spirits. They resolved to disband. One joined the United-States service as band-master, some went to New York, but the greater number remained at Philadelphia. A few weeks after the orchestra had separated, a profitable engagement was offered at Washington. The offer was accepted, and the dispersed members recalled. After this Washington engagement they went to Baltimore, where they unexpectedly first found recognition for their masterly performances. In Baltimore they gave, within two weeks, ten in every way successful concerts. They next concluded to visit Boston. On the route to that city they gave concerts at several New-England towns, such as New Haven, Hartford, Springfield, Worcester, Providence. On April 14 the Germanians gave their first concert in Melodeon Hall at Boston. The audience

was small, but composed of real connoisseurs. The playing of the excellent orchestra was received with enthusiastic applause; and of the ten pieces of their programme, six had to be repeated: the artistic success was complete, and the reputation of the Germania was now an established fact in Boston. Twenty concerts were given in rapid succession, to overflowing houses; and the name of the now famous Germania Orchestra found its way to all other cities that had any pretensions to a taste for good concerts. Other New-England cities were visited; and even the manager of Castle Garden, at New York, offered them an engagement to play at summer festivals arranged at that establishment. During the summer season the Germania gave highly successful summer concerts at Newport. It would lead me too far, to follow closely the subsequent movements of the enthusiastic Germanians during their artistic peregrination through the States. In the course of their six years' organization, they visited all the principal cities, East, West, and South, and gave eight hundred and twenty-nine concerts, not counting those performances of cantatas and oratorios arranged by local choral societies, to which the Germania played orchestral accompaniments.

The general arrangement of the programmes was a couple of good overtures, parts or the whole of a symphony, two solos, and a selection of some popular character. The symphonies they produced were Beethoven's nine; the most important ones of Mozart and Haydn; Mendelssohn's Third and Fourth; Spohr's "Weihe der Töne," "Historische," and "Irdisches und Göttliches" for double orchestra; F. Ries's in D-minor; Gade's in C-minor; Schumann's in B-flat; Liszt's "Les

Préludes;" all the overtures of Beethoven, Mozart, Weber, Mendelssohn; several by Spohr, Gluck, Cherubini, Gade, Rossini, Auber, Lindpaintner, Marschner, Schumann; Berlioz's "Les Francs Juges," "Le Carnival Romain;" Wagner's Rienzi," "Tannhäuser;" and numerous pieces arranged from old and modern masters, up to Wagner's "Lohengrin." In Boston they produced Beethoven's Ninth, the Handel and Haydn Society singing the chorus part. Whenever those compositions, that required a large orchestra for adequate rendering, were to be performed, additional instrumentalists were engaged by the Germania. Among the celebrated artists who often appeared in the Germania's concerts, we find Jenny Lind, Henrietta Sontag, Tedesco, Camilla Urso, Ole Bull, Alfred Jaell, August Kreissmann, and many others of local reputation in the different cities where the famous orchestra appeared.

But the hardship of continual travelling from place to place, the uncertainty of an existence in a pecuniary sense, the desire to create for themselves permanent homes, began to tell on the members; and on Sept. 13, 1854, the news went through the press that the Germania Orchestra existed no longer, the members having concluded to disband.

The advent of the Germania marks an important era in the development of American musical culture. Their influence in awakening, even creating, a taste and understanding for the highest and noblest forms of instrumental music was invaluable. The great technical perfection with which they rendered every piece of their programmes, and the youthful fire and expression which they infused into every strain, deeply impressed the most inexperienced as well as the most cultivated

audiences. The former class of listeners was suddenly brought into contact with a form of musical beauty of which they had had no previous conception: the others received new art inspiration, and even found their own ideal lifted higher. To those few orchestral organizations that existed in Boston and New York, the model performances of the Germania served as an incitement to greater efforts. Everywhere the genial little band of artists was greeted with respect, and even affection, by those of their colleagues who had crossed the Atlantic Ocean years before them, and to whom the arrival and labors of the Germania appeared as a renewal of artistic bonds between the old and new homes. To those youths of American birth who became interested in the study of a beautiful art, and who thus enjoyed the advantage of hearing the great masterworks rendered for the first time by the Germania Orchestra, and to whose minds the manifold beautiful tone-colors of a small but perfect orchestral combination were now revealed, the lesson was of incalculable benefit. A vast number of pieces of all styles, from the small dance-form to the Ninth Symphony, were for the first time introduced by the Germanians in their American concerts. Theirs was severe pioneering work, but clothed in the most beautiful artistic garb. It was an unique spectacle to see this band of finished artists, who were able to play a Beethoven symphony by heart, suddenly placed before an audience, among whom perhaps a dozen only had ever heard fine music played by an orchestra. Nothing indicated in the appearance and countenance of the Germanians that *blasé*, disdainful, overbearing expression and behavior so often noticed among travelling artists, when first placed before audi-

ences inexperienced in musical matters. It seemed, to a close observer, that the Germania Orchestra made, in such cases, still greater efforts to give a fine performance, for new disciples were to be conquered in the interest of art; and in this way that sympathetic bond may be explained which at once sprung up between the audience and the artists. It is no exaggeration to say, that the announcement of a concert by the Germania was the signal for the anticipation of a spontaneous, joyful, artistic feast. And when the news spread, that the Germania Orchestra had disbanded, many throughout the land, who looked forward to their visits with happy expectation (the Germania now was considered an American orchestral institution), felt the loss as that of dear friends.

But (further remarks the above-quoted article) who shall say that the Germania Orchestra had outlived its usefulness? or who shall measure the value of its offerings on the shrine of true and beautiful art? Not only was the country forever indebted to the energetic and faithful organization for its personal labors, but, even after it had ceased to exist, its influence for the good of music had, in many cases, only just begun. Wherever a member of the Germania has settled down and made his home, there he has founded a sort of nucleus, and gathered about him the very choicest musical spirits of his neighborhood. Some of these artists have achieved a reputation since the orchestra disbanded, far wider than they had even enjoyed before. Thus, Carl Zerrahn, the original "first flute" of the Germania, is now the able conductor of the Boston Handel and Haydn Society. Carl Bergmann, until his death, held the conductor's baton of the New-York Philharmonic Society.

William Schultze was, until a few years ago, the first violin of the Boston Mendelssohn Quintet Club, and is at present director of the musical department of Syracuse University. Carl Sentz settled in Philadelphia, and did good service there as conductor of orchestral concerts. But H. F. Albrecht, for a time one of the viola-players, and afterwards second clarinet of the Germania, experienced a very melancholy fate. He was an idealist in the highest acceptation of the term, simple in his habits, modest in his pretensions, too unworldly for this world, but one of the noblest souls that ever lived. He had a good education, and was well informed. The son of a physician of Grevesmühlen, Mecklenburg, he became a musician ; but he was more attracted towards music on its æsthetic than on its practical side. He became a good though not distinguished performer on the instruments he played. Following these æsthetic inclinations, he early began to collect a valuable musical library. When he arrived in a city, it was not the general meeting-place where his companions gathered that attracted him most, but the dusty book-shelves of the second-hand booksellers. He thus learned to know and appreciate the treasures of musical literature, and collected, at considerable personal expense, a rare and important musical library. He became acquainted with that great musical theorist and scholar, Dr. Dehn, librarian of the Royal Library at Berlin, who, in consideration of Albrecht's musico-literary efficiency, desired to appoint him his assistant librarian, a post he was well fitted to fill. But his unselfishness prevented him from accepting this offer. The poverty and misery of the lower classes of the German people, aggravated in the year 1847 by a *quasi-*

famine, touched his heart to such a degree that he began to devote his thoughts to projects for the amelioration of the lot of the poorer classes. Then it was that Cabet's book, "Voyage en Icarie," fell in his hands. He became converted to communism as the only possible means that would enable him to carry out his humanitarian aims. But this communism was ideal philanthropy: it was not modern petroleumism. Though it bordered on Utopianism, yet it rested on noble intentions. To see the working of Cabet's colony in America, became his most ardent desire; and, of course, he greeted with delight the projected visit of the Germania to the United States. He became a member of the band. He also entered into correspondence with Henrici, the president of a communistic colony in the neighborhood of Pittsburgh, to which he afterwards paid a visit. After the disbandment of the Germania, Albrecht endeavored to give his communistic tendencies a practical turn. He went to Nauvoo, Ill., and became a member of the Cabet colony. In 1849, when the Mormons had been expelled from Nauvoo, Cabet transferred his settlement thither. Soon after, when unhappy dissensions began to break out among the Cabetists, Albrecht left them, and went back to Philadelphia. He fortunately saved his rare collection of valuable books on music, and brought it with him. He settled in Philadelphia, and married there. Though disappointed in his communistic experiences, he was not weary of his noble idealism. But he was out of his element; his great sense of justice was continually wounded; his inborn kindness of heart was exploited by sharpers; his idealistic views regarding life and art were misunderstood and unappreciated even by his nearest relatives. He

soon found that he had no further use for his library and sold it to J. W. Drexel, the well-known musical connoisseur, who gave Albrecht *carte blanche* to complete the collection. But our idealist sighed for a home, — a quiet home, where he might dream out his communistic dream, far removed from all the cares of prosaic existence. With the means he possessed, he bought a small property in his native town. He took passage on the steamer "Schiller;" and, when that ill-fated vessel went down, Albrecht, with his wife and three children, found a watery grave in the Atlantic Ocean.

In August, 1853,[1] M. Jullien came to America with a splendid orchestra, and commenced a series of promenade concerts at Castle Garden. The orchestra he brought over with him, between forty and fifty in number (another report says twenty-four), comprised some of the finest solo performers of Europe, — such as Koenig the unrivalled cornetist; the great contra-bassist Bottesini; Lavigne, then considered the first living oboist; the excellent clarinetist Wuille; the wonderful ophicleidist Hughes. The Mollenhauer brothers also belonged to this band. In New York the number of the orchestra was increased to ninety-seven, — then the largest orchestra that had ever appeared before an American audience. It was composed of three flutes, one flageolet, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, three trumpets, three cornets, four horns, four trombones, three snare-drums, one bass-drum, one pair of cymbals, two pairs of kettledrums, seventeen first and sixteen second violins, ten violas, ten violoncellos, and eleven double-basses. The splendor and

[1] Not 1856, as J. W. Moore has it in his Dictionary of Musical Information.

beautiful quality of this orchestra were a revelation to American musical amateurs.

Jullien was a capital drill-master and conductor. Although somewhat eccentric, he nevertheless possessed a genuine power of inspiring his men. The gradation from softness, through *crescendo* to imposing, almost overwhelming loudness of tone; and, *vice versa*, *diminuendo*, to the softest whisper; besides the manifold tone-combinations, the great diversity of instruments, the dynamic and rhythmical points made, etc., — were euphonic effects which American audiences had never before dreamed possible of production with such a great number of performers. Jullien's first concert consisted of the "Freyschütz" overture, Andante and Storm movement from Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, and his own "Prima Donna" waltz. The lesson Jullien taught American orchestras was a fruitful one. Although some critics of that day looked upon the lively Jullien as a humbug (others dubbed him the Napoleon among conductors), his humbug was really but the excessive theatrical expression of a peculiar character and orchestral genius; and in his line he exerted a very excellent influence on orchestral performances. He first introduced composers' nights in New York and Boston, such as Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn, etc., nights, when the programme consisted of works by one of these composers alone. He travelled through the principal cities of the States, and, through his wonderful orchestral performances, left everywhere an excellent impression. The fine singer Anna Zerr belonged to his company, and sang many fine vocal selections in the concerts. All these enterprises, on a great scale, stirred up musical taste and emulation among rising

American musicians. Jullien was a genial, kind-hearted artist, and did not forget to bring out some of the instrumental works of the native American composers H. W. Fry and G. Bristow, and, during his short stay in this country, greatly stimulated and encouraged musical art.

SIXTH PERIOD, 1861–1890.

CIVIL WAR.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OPERA IN NEW YORK.

THE great activity that reigned in American musical matters during the last period I have recorded, produced excellent results in every direction. In the West, newly established cities began to organize musical societies, to build concert-halls or opera-houses, and to invite travelling artists to give concerts. But suddenly, amid this apparent peace and prosperity, the cannon of Fort Sumter gave the signal of the beginning of a deadly strife between the two antagonistic sections of the United States. With the breaking out of the Civil War, nearly all peaceful occupations came to a standstill. This was especially the case in regard to the cultivation of art, which had begun to strike deeper roots in a ground so far rather uncongenial to its growth. Men of all classes, of all nationalities, of all ages, rushed to arms; and musical societies were at once broken up, or, for the time being, utterly paralyzed and rendered inactive. The only music people cared

to hear, people had to hear, was that of the bugle, of the fife, of the drum, calling men to arms; or the war-song, giving vent to men's excited feeling of patriotism.

When civil war broke out, nearly all foreign artists departed for Europe. Some few opera-singers remained in New York. In the fall of 1861 Ullmann, who still lingered on the banks of the Hudson, issued a card to the "powers that be" of the Academy of Music, asking a benefit representation, as a compensation for "all the sacrifices he has made, and the energy he has displayed, to maintain Italian opera" in New York. In consequence of this, opera-performances were arranged with Miss Kellogg and Miss Hinkley, and Messrs. Brignoli, Mancuri, and Susini. This went on for a little while. Were I, however, to follow up the erratic path Italian opera pursued during this period, my narrative would be simply a repetition of that of past periods. Ullmann, Maretzek, the brothers Strakosch, Grau, sometimes in partnership, sometimes in bitter opposition, endeavored, with more or less luck, to prevent the frisky thing from losing its artificially propped-up balance. During the period I now write about, every one of these Italian opera-managers succeeded, at some season or other, in bringing together an excellent company, like that of Maretzek, when Medori, Zucchi, Mazzoleni, Bellini, and other good artists, successively belonged to them; or that of Strakosch, when he produced "Lohengrin" with Nilsson and Campanini. The most important new operas — such as Meyerbeer's "L'Africaine," "Le Pardon de Ploermel," "L'Étoile du Nord," Verdi's "Aïda," Ricci's "Crispino e la Comare," Gounod's "Faust," A. Thomas's "Mignon," Wagner's "Lohengrin," — were sometimes put on the stage with

a good deal of scenic splendor and brilliancy, and represented with acceptable dramatic *ensemble.* Chorus and orchestra were, at the same time, rather effective, and well balanced in number and proportion.

After the first excitement of the war-fever was over, people in large cities, as if to counteract the effects of the terrible suspense caused by the uncertainty of ever-occurring battles, began to flock in crowds to places of amusement, in order to seek temporary forgetfulness of the terrible drama that was being enacted on the battle-field. The opera, as well as the theatres, for a time reaped an abundant harvest. When the war was over, and with the financial depression which soon after occurred, a re-action in the patronage of amusements also set in: to keep up Italian opera with "panic prices" was out of the question, so opera went down again.

A very interesting opera venture must be recorded here, — that of Carl Anschütz's German opera season, which commenced in September, 1862, at the old Wallack Theatre on Broadway and Broome Street. Though also of short duration, this enterprise possessed very real merits. The Anschütz company did not comprise any great singers. Mesdames Johannsen, Von Berkel, Rotter; Messrs. Lotti, Quint, Graff, Weinlich, — could not well be compared with the Italian singers at the Academy of Music; but the manner in which Anschütz put the operas of his *répertoire* on the stage was highly enjoyable. The scenic arrangement was not brilliant, — indeed, it was rather modest, — but it was complete, and in a certain harmony with the idea of the work: the performances were artistically rounded off. There was an excellent orchestra, a sufficiently strong and intelligently drilled chorus, all in the hands of an ex-

perienced, energetic conductor, — Anschütz himself: thus the whole force made a satisfactory *ensemble.* And what a list of charming operas was thus represented! — "Die Zauberflöte," "Don Juan," "Die Entführung aus dem Serail," "Fidelio," "Der Freyschütz," Lortzing's "Czar und Zimmermann" and "Der Wildschütz," Auber's "Le Maçon," besides Flotow's inevitable "Martha" and "Stradella."

Many a sincere music-lover, American and foreign, went to the little German opera-house, and immensely enjoyed the musico-dramatic treat. These audiences were the most musically intelligent, and genuinely enthusiastic and cultured, then to be met with in New York. There was no artificial, outside excitement, or vapid, sensational air, about the enterprise. Anschütz, and his troupe of intelligent artists, meant to do the right thing: they gave operatic representations for art's sake chiefly, though they of course expected a fair pecuniary benefit for their labors. On such a healthy basis opera should be founded, in order to take strong root in any community.

The times, however, were not propitious to Anschütz' enterprise: he also had to give up his venture.

During this epoch, when society became more and more demoralized by the effects of a long war, a certain class of men, suddenly enriched by reckless speculation, began to imprint their influence on the character of public amusements. On the strength of their suddenly acquired riches, the sensuous side of the nature of these people began to clamor for adequate food. It seems as if, during a long and brutal war-struggle, the lowest traits of man's animal nature will gain the supremacy. Then it was that the "Black Crook" dis-

played itself on the boards of Niblo's Theatre, and the cleverly constructed Offenbach *opera-bouffe* filled the French opera in New York to overflowing; this latter imparting to the American art-amateur a wrong and highly exaggerated idea of real French lyrico-dramatic art.

Compared to these Offenbach fantastic frolics, put together with the utmost scenic refinement and great musical *savoir faire*, — Offenbach was, in his line, a genius, — the legitimate opera-form appeared, for a time, heavy, old-fashioned, and tedious. Then "La Belle Hélène" caused "Norma" to be forgotten, "La Grande Duchesse" vanquished "Lucrezia," "La Belle Parfumeuse" appeared more attractive than "Lucia." Offenbach, for a while, monopolized all operatic patronage: he became so popular in New York that his admirers brought him over in person to America. He, however, failed to make the expected impression upon the audiences before whom he conducted. After the curiosity of seeing the master of *opera-bouffe* alive was satisfied, people remained away from the summer-night concerts in which he took part as conductor *d'honneur*. It often happens in America, that, when a thing becomes popular, it, for the time being, becomes so at a furious rate, to be afterwards just as suddenly deserted. When Gilbert and Sullivan's innocent, clever operatic trifles "Pinafore" and the "Pirates of Penzance" were first produced here, babes and old people revelled in them; children who could scarcely yet read their primers became all of a sudden operetta performers. If one were to believe the articles which appeared in different newspapers all over the country, commenting on those wonderful juvenile operetta performances, one would think that sing-

ing-stars must be lying about by the hundreds in all quarters of the United States.

But people seem already half tired of the Gilbert-Sullivan operetta; and the interest which here and there may yet linger for the clever works of these Englishmen will eventually be totally destroyed by the multitude of comic operas, — in which there is generally nothing comical but the title, — which, like mushrooms or weeds, are now starting up all through the country.

CHAPTER XIX.

PROGRESS OF INSTRUMENTAL AND VOCAL MUSIC IN NEW YORK.

Now that the Philharmonic Society has become the foremost instrumental musical society in the United States, the inception of the plan of its organization is claimed by a number of persons. But the historical facts, as given in Chapter XIV. of this work, are the true ones. Those facts are supported by a passage printed in the Tenth Annual Report of the Philharmonic Society, which, when I wrote that narrative, was not at my disposal. At the time that report appeared, many of the first members, who helped to organize the society, were still active performers at the concerts of the society. Here is the passage: —

"For several years previous to the spring of 1842, it was a subject of general remark among the leading musicians of New York, that there was then no association of professional musicians, nor any complete orchestral band in the city, capable of performing the grand instrumental compositions of the great masters. During this period of time, Mr. U. C. Hill, who had formerly spent some time in Europe, was active in urging such musicians as Mr. C. E. Horn, Mr. W. Penson, Mr. P. Maroncelli, and others, to unite in a movement for the establishment of a society for the general interests of the art, and for the proper performance of great orchestral pieces."

U. C. Hill was the real originator of the Philharmonic Society; and, as far as I know, the now financially and artistically strong Philharmonic Society has not yet found it convenient to commemorate by a suitable monument the enthusiastic musician's noble, disinterested deed. To Hill and to Bergmann the Philharmonic Society of New York owe a great deal of gratitude. They did not draw large salaries from the treasury of the society, but cheerfully labored for the good cause, sharing the dividends equally with the other members.

It is interesting to follow up the gradual growth and divers transformations of this great American orchestral society. I will place here a few mile-stones, to mark some of the periods of such transformations as are given in the printed reports and programmes of the society.

During the first season the orchestra was composed of 52 performers, belonging to the following nationalities (see names in Chapter XIV.): 22 Germans, 13 Americans, 11 English, 4 French, 2 Italians. In 1854 there were 67 performing and 89 actual members; viz.: 62 Germans, 12 Americans, 7 English, 4 Italians, 3 French, 1 Dane. In 1857 there were 78 performing members. In 1865 the orchestra was increased to 81 musicians, of whom 70 were Germans; thus the non-German element was gradually disappearing. In 1867 99 performers appeared on the stage of the Philharmonic Society. The number has since varied between 90 and 100. It consists at present of 94 players, of whom 89 are Germans, and the rest Americans, English, and Italians.

During the first ten seasons the income of the society fluctuated between two and three thousand dollars. In

1854 it reached $6,859. Here are the dividends of the first thirteen seasons: $25, $32, $35, $37, $35, $26, $17.50, $32, $35, $31, $44, $55, $65. In 1864 the income was $13,662, of which $6,255 were divided among the 94 actual members. In 1868 the sum of $24,706 was earned, leaving, after expenses were deducted, $13,251 to be divided. Substantially these figures were maintained until 1874, when the dividend dropped to $3,212. Ten years later the orchestral dividends gradually rose again to $17,914; the entire earnings reaching the sum of $28,877.78. Since then these figures have little changed.

The Second Annual Report has, among others, the following cheering paragraph: —

"Good feeling among the members is on the increase; much improvement in the execution of instrumental music has been effected, and the public have shown that they can appreciate, and will patronize, our efforts to produce with their proper effect the classical compositions of the great masters. Everything seems to indicate a prosperous future."

The state of musical art in New York did not at that time present quite so encouraging an aspect, and in the Sixth Annual Report the committee of management thought it advisable and useful to insert a sort of musical lecture, addressed to those

"Who have at heart the advancement of instrumental music, or who advocate the cultivation of the fine arts as a powerful means of elevating and refining the human character. Perhaps it will be well here to offer an argument in favor of our cause, for we are living in a community where some considerable prejudice exists, unfavorable to music in its highest state of cultivation, — more particularly to instrumental music and to some musical instruments."

Our musical philosophers had not a very clear idea of the æsthetic meaning of the masterpieces of the great composers; for, in order to assure the public of the perfect morality of their cause, they declared that "the performance and enjoyment of music, *when it is not associated with words, action, and scenery*" (the italics are mine), "must be allowed to be *purely innocent and harmless.*" Think of the "innocent and harmless" *Eroica*, the Fifth! The Ninth is of course not *innocent and harmless;* its last part is associated with words. *O tempora, O mores!* Here is another tough morsel of Philharmonic philosophy: "It must also be acknowledged that the science of music, as it exists in nature, is not of human invention" (of course not, otherwise it could not exist in nature) "(though the present system of notation, arrangement, or representation, undoubtedly is), but of Divine appointment. Therefore it should be cultivated equally with all our other faculties; and its pursuit is as useful and necessary — and therefore as honorable — as that of other arts and sciences." Later on it is said that the hearing of instrumental works of Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, Spohr, Weber, Mendelssohn, etc., is "an enjoyment of the highest intellectual character"; after all, not quite such a wishy-washy, innocent, harmless affair. The following sentence, moving on practical ground, has not yet lost its true meaning: "As a school for the formation of a correct taste and style of performance, for all who are aiming at high attainments in the art, either as composers or performers, public or private, the performances of such a society at its rehearsals and concerts are of very great importance." Those early members of the Philharmonic Society entertained a lofty aim. Their

object was exclusively to disseminate the advancement of instrumental music, not alone "in this city," but "throughout the world." Pretty modest on their part.

Frequenters of the Philharmonic concerts, as given in our days, often have occasion to find fault with the solo vocalists, that appear in those concerts. The management of the Philharmonic concerts are really not to blame for this shortcoming. The constitution says: "This association shall be called 'The Philharmonic Society'; its object shall be the cultivation and performance of instrumental music." An old report already dealt with this question in the following manner: —

"Vocal music has been introduced only to satisfy the demands of those who desired it, as a relief from that which they did not so well appreciate, and who could not without it, perhaps, have been persuaded to contribute that support to the cause which was felt should be secured. Expressions have been made from time to time at the business meetings of the society, which show that it is a prevailing opinion or wish that no more vocal music should be introduced at our concerts, but that the cause of instrumental music should stand or fall on its own merits."

The successors of those brave enthusiasts have, however, taken good care not to resort to such heroic means, and, when it served their interests, introduced vocal music of any style, *même l'ennuyeux*. The influence of the Philharmonic Society radiated in many directions.

"The gratifying success of the society in awakening a new interest for instrumental music in this city, is clearly shown by the large number of private clubs now in existence, at which the compositions

of the best masters are very generally performed, and that in many instances to a very creditable degree of excellence."

The following extract from a letter by the late Mr. George T. Strong (one time its president) to the Philharmonic Society will serve as a proof of the appreciation on the part of educated New Yorkers, of the society's good work: —

"To your society I owe my introduction to the greatest works of the musical art, and the first revelation that ever dawned on me of the supernatural power latent in the orchestra. The orchestra of Mozart, Beethoven, and Weber, the society's first concert in December, 1842, and the concerts that followed it in the next few years, I shall never forget; each was to me a great event."

It is a fact that the great majority of the regular subscribers to the Philharmonic concerts are Americans, — mostly descendants of those who, like Mr. Strong, received their first artistico-musical impressions at the concerts of the society. These music-lovers have stood by the society through bad and prosperous times. The Philharmonic Society is, above all, a New York institution, and will always be looked upon with pride by the true New Yorker.

I will copy, as an interesting tidbit, the letter of Richard Wagner to the society, when they conferred on him the title of honorary member: —

MY DEAR SIR: —

While I express my sincere thanks for your communication regarding the honor conferred upon me in New York, I also beg you kindly to apprise the respected Philharmonic Society how highly I esteem the distinction which I have received at their hands. To have won friends whose sympathy makes the new — alas! to me strange world — appear as my spirit's home, I must regard as a most gratifying reward for my labors there in the cause of art.

Returning these friends my hearty and grateful recognition, I subscribe myself yours, and the members of the Philharmonic Society of New York,

Most respectfully and devotedly,

RICHARD WAGNER.

BAIREUTH, April 4, 1873.

The records of the Philharmonic Society during the first years of its existence were guarded so carelessly that many valuable documents, like Mendelssohn's and Spohr's letters accepting honorary membership, were lost.

At the breaking out of the Civil War, the society felt the effects of the general stagnation of business: its audiences were often small, and the result of the whole work presented was rather disappointing. The society, however, managed to keep together; and, with the return of better times, its audiences again grew larger. So far, the Philharmonic Society was the only orchestral society that gave a regular annual series of concerts in New York. Its audiences represented all New Yorkers, native as well as foreign, who were musical, or had any pretension to musical taste. The piano-teacher went there to be seen by, and to see, his pupils, or to refresh his mind by listening to masterpieces; the aspiring young composer went there, the score of some orchestral work under his arm, with the intention of studying the form and orchestral effects of the compositions performed; the boarding-school mistress had her seats there, whither she went accompanied by those pupils who had come to New York to enjoy especial musical advantages. Thus, with every year, as New-York musical progress advanced, the public audiences grew larger, and more musically intelligent. The Philharmonic Society, so far,

had every thing its own way. The scope of its artistic labors may be estimated by the number of important works performed during its long existence.

INSTRUMENTAL WORKS PERFORMED BY THE NEW-YORK PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY UP TO 1880.

Here are the complete programmes of the first season.

First Time.	No. of Times.	Title.	Composer.
		FIRST CONCERT, DEC. 7.	
1842–43.	10	Symphony: C-minor	Beethoven.
"	–	Scena from "Oberon"	Weber.
"	1	Quintet in D-minor	Hummel.
"	7	Overture: "Oberon"	Weber.
"	–	Duet from "Armida"	Rossini.
"	–	Scena from "Fidelio"	Beethoven.
"	–	Aria from "Belmont and Constanza"	Mozart.
"	1	Overture in D	Kalliwoda.
		SECOND CONCERT, FEB. 18, 1843.	
"	14	Symphony: "Eroica"	Beethoven.
"	–	Aria from "I Puritani"	Bellini.
"	–	Elégie (violoncello)	Romberg.
"	2	Overture: "William Tell"	Rossini.
"	–	Inflamatus	Rossini.
"	–	Romanza and Rondo from A-flat concerto	Hummel.
"	3	Overture: "Freyschütz"	Weber.
		THIRD CONCERT, APRIL 22, 1843.	
"	3	Symphony No. 2	Beethoven.
"	–	Canzonetta: "Sympathy"	Haydn.
"	4	Overture: "Midsummer Night's Dream"	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Septuor	Beethoven.
"	–	Scena and recitative and aria: "Jessonda"	Spohr.
"	5	Overture: "Jubilee"	Weber.
1843–44.	13	Symphony No. 7	Beethoven.
"	6	Overture: "Zauberflöte"	Mozart.
"	6	Symphony: "Jupiter"	Mozart.
4 concerts	1	Septuor, first and second movements	Hummel.
per season.	1	Symphony, D-minor	Spohr.
1843–44.	8	Overture: "Euryanthe"	Weber.
"	–	Concert B-minor (piano)	Hummel.
"	4	Overture: "Beherrscher der Geister"	Weber.
1844–45.	6	Symphony No. 8	Beethoven.

First Time.	No. of Times.	Title.	Composer.
1844–45.	2	Overture: "Hebriden"	Mendelssohn.
"	3	Symphony No. 3	Haydn.
"	5	Overture: "Jessonda"	Spohr.
"	2	Overture: "Naïads"	Bennett.
"	1	Fest-overture	Ries.
"	9	Overture: "Melusine"	Mendelssohn.
1845–46.	6	Symphony No. 3	Mendelssohn.
"	4	Overture: "Anacreon"	Cherubini.
"	1	Overture: "Jeune Henri"	Méhul.
"	2	Overture: "Marmion"	Loder.
"	1	Concert overture	Reissiger.
"	–	Piano Concerto, G-minor	Mendelssohn.
"	–	Fourth Concerto (violin)	DeBeriot.
"	1	Symphony No. 1	Kalliwoda.
"	6	Overture: "Les Francs Juges"	Berlioz.
"	4	Symphony, G-minor	Mozart.
"	12	Symphony No. 6	Beethoven.
"	5	Symphony No. 9	Beethoven.
1846–47.	7	Symphony: "Die Weihe der Töne"	Spohr.
"	2	Symphony, E-flat major	Mozart.
"	5	Overture: "King Lear"	Berlioz.
"	1	Overture, op. 3	Bristow.
1847–48.	1	Symphony No. 1	Spohr.
"	5	Overture: "Egmont"	Beethoven.
"	1	Septuor Concertando	Lindpaintner.
1848–49.	4	Symphony in C	Gade.
"	1	Double Symphony (two orchestras)	Spohr.
"	1	Prize Symphony	Lachner.
"	2	Overture: "Wood Nymph"	Bennett.
"	2	Triomphale	Ries.
"	–	Concerto (violin)	Vieuxtemps.
"	–	Concertstück	Weber.
1849–50.	9	Symphony No. 4	Beethoven.
"	5	Overture: "Meererstille und Glückliche Fahrt"	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Overture: "Huguenots"	Meyerbeer.
"	4	Music to "Midsummer Night's Dream"	Mendelssohn.
"	–	Concerto (violin)	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Symphony Concertando	Lindpaintner.
"	–	Concertando for Four Violins	Maurer.
1850–51.	9	Symphony, C-major	Schubert.
"	3	Symphony, B-flat	Haydn.
"	1	Overture: "Vampyr"	Lindpaintner.
"	1	Overture: "Vestale"	Spontini.
"	2	Overture: "Robespierre"	Litolff
"	–	Concerto No. 2 (violin)	David, Ferdinand.

First Time.	No. of Times.	Title.	Composer.
1851–52.	6	Symphony No. 4	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Overture: "Joseph"	Méhul.
"	2	Overture: "Faust"	Lindpaintner.
"	–	Concerto No. 6 (violin)	DeBeriot.
1852–53.	6	Symphony No. 1	Schumann.
1852–53.	3	Overture: "Ossian"	Gade.
"	5	Overture: "Fingal's Cave"	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Overture: "Reiselust"	Lobe.
"	3	Overture: "In the Highlands"	Gade.
"	9	Overture: "Leonore," No. 3	Beethoven.
1853–54.	1	Symphony: "The Seasons"	Spohr.
"	9	Symphony No. 2 in C	Schumann.
"	1	Symphony in B	Schneider,
"	2	Overture: "Vampyr"	Marschner.
"	2	Overture: "Faust"	Spohr.
1854–55.	1	Overture: "Abraham's Sacrifice"	Lindpaintner.
"	1	Overture: "Preciosa"	Weber.
"	1	Overture: "Maritana"	Wallace.
"	2	Overture: "Ruy Blas"	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Overture: "Olympia"	Spontini.
"	8	Overture: "Tannhäuser"	Wagner.
"	–	Concerto: E-flat (piano)	Beethoven.
1855–56.	1	Symphony: "Jullien"	Bristow.
"	4	Overture: "Iphigenia"	Gluck.
"	1	Overture: "Hans Heiling"	Marschner.
1856–57.	1	Overture: "Medea"	Cherubini.
"	7	Overture: "Faust"	Wagner.
"	1	Overture: "Uriel Acosta"	Schindelmeisser.
"	1	Concert overture	Ries.
"	1	Overture: "Chant des Belges"	Litolff.
"	–	Concerto: first part, piano	Henselt.
1857–58.	1	Symphony in E	Hiller.
"	4	Overture: "Manfred"	Schumann.
"	1	Overture: "Merry Wives of Windsor"	Nicolai.
"	4	Overture: "Coriolan"	Beethoven
"	6	Overture, Scherzo, and Finale	Schumann.
"	1	Symphony-concerto, piano	Litolff.
1858–59.	1	Symphony No. 5	Gade.
"	2	Symphony No. 2 in D	Haydn.
5 concerts per season.	1	Symphony in F-sharp	Bristow.
	6	Symphony No. 4	Schumann.
1858–59.	1	Overture: "Siege of Corinth"	Rossini.
"	1	Overture: "Fierabras"	Schubert.
"	–	Concerto, A-minor (piano)	Schumann.
1859–60.	7	Poëme Symphonique: "Tasso"	Liszt.
"	2	Overture: "Fidelio"	Beethoven.

First Time.	No. of Times.	Title.	Composer.
1859–60.	1	Overture: "Festival"	Lachner.
1860–61.	5	Symphony No. 3	Schumann.
"	1	Overture: "Leonore" No. 1	Beethoven.
"	3	Overture: "Genoveva"	Schumann.
"	1	Poëme Symphonique: "Festklänge"	Liszt.
"	1	Walpurgis Night, Cantata	Mendelssohn.
1861–62.	2	Symphony No. 5	Mozart.
"	5	Poëme Symphonique: "Les Préludes"	Liszt.
"	5	Overture: "Carnaval Romain"	Berlioz.
"	2	Overture: "Rienzi"	Wagner.
"	–	Concerto No. 2, in F, piano	Chopin.
"	–	Concerto for violin	Beethoven.
1862–63.	1	Overture: "Traum in der Christnacht"	Hiller.
"	1	Overture: B-flat	Rubinstein.
"	–	Fantaisie (Piano)	Schubert-Liszt.
1863–64.	1	Symphony: "Faust"	Liszt.
"	1	Hymn of Praise	Mendelssohn.
"	2	Overture: "Flying Dutchman"	Wagner.
"	1	Overture: "Scotch"	Gade.
"	1	Concert overture	Rietz.
1864–65.	2	Symphony, E-flat	Haydn.
"	2	Overture: "Medea"	Bargiel.
"	1	Concerto: Violoncello	Ritter, F. L.
1865–66.	4	Poëme Symphonique: "Mazeppa"	Liszt.
"	1	Symphony No. 1, D-major	Mozart.
"	2	Symphonie Fantastique	Berlioz.
"	3	Overture: "Prometheus"	Bargiel.
"	3	Introduction: "Tristan and Isolde"	Wagner.
1866–67.	1	Symphony, D-minor	Volkmann.
"	1	Romeo and Juliette, 3d and 4th movements	Berlioz.
"	1	Overture: "Nächtlicher Zug"	Liszt.
"	1	Overture: "Columbus"	Bristow.
"	3	Introduction to "Lohengrin"	Wagner.
"	2	Overture: "Les deux Journées"	Cherubini.
1867–68.	1	Overture: "Othello"	Ritter.
1868–69.	1	Reformations Symphony	Mendelssohn.
"	3	Unfinished Symphony	Schubert.
6 concerts per season.	2	"Ce qu'on entend sur la Montagne"	Liszt.
1868–69.	1	"Ideale"	Liszt.
"	2	"Manfred" Music	Schumann.
"	1	Overture: "Hamlet"	Gade.
"	1	Overture, "Semiramide"	Catel.
"	1	Suite	Bach.
1869–70.	2	Symphony: "Divina Commedia"	Liszt.
"	1	Symphony in C	Raff.
"	4	Overture: "Sakuntala"	Goldmark.

First Time.	No. of Times.	Title.	Composer.
1869–70.	2	Leonore, No. 2	Beethoven.
1870–71.	2	Symphony: "Ocean"	Rubinstein.
"	3	Music to "Egmont"	Beethoven.
"	1	Overture: "Aladdin"	Reinecke.
"	1	Overture: "Idomeneo"	Mozart.
1871–72.	1	Symphony: G-major	Haydn.
"	2	Symphony: "Im Walde"	Raff.
"	1	Symphony No. 2	Ritter.
"	1	Overture: "Julius Cæsar"	Schumann.
"	3	Overture: "Meistersinger von Nürnberg"	Wagner.
"	1	Overture: "Macbeth"	Heinefetter.
1872–73.	1	Symphony No. 4	Raff.
"	1	Symphony No. 8	Gade.
"	1	Symphony: "Oxford"	Haydn.
"	1	Hirtengesang from "Christus" oratorio	Liszt.
"	1	Overture: "Prinzessin Ilse"	Erdmansdörfer.
"	2	Overture: "Consecration of the House"	Beethoven.
"	1	Overture: "Galilei"	Matzka.
1873–74.	1	Symphony No. 1	Rubinstein.
"	1	Symphony: "Arcadian"	Bristow.
"	1	Symphony: "Leonore"	Raff.
"	1	Introduction to "Loreley"	Bruch.
"	1	Overture: "Michel Angelo"	Gade.
"	1	Suite	Grimm.
1874–75.	1	Symphony No. 9	Haydn.
"	1	Symphony No. 6	Raff.
"	1	Symphony No. 3	Spohr.
"	2	Symphony No. 1	Mozart.
"	1	Andante from Trio, op. 97 (arranged)	Beethoven-Liszt.
"	1	Ciaconne (arranged)	Bach-Raff.
"	1	Overture: "Normannenzug"	Dietrich.
"	1	Overture: op. 15	Lassen.
"	1	Fantaisie-overture	Bennett.
1875–76.	1	Symphony No. 1	Metzdorff.
"	1	Symphony No. 2	Raff.
"	1	Overture: "Julius Cæsar"	Bulow.
"	1	Overture: "Faniska"	Cherubini.
"	1	Overture: "Romeo and Julia"	Tschaikowsky.
1876–77.	1	Symphony: "Ländiche Hochzeit"	Goldmark.
"	2	Serenade	Fuchs.
"	1	Fantaisie for orchestra, piano, and chorus	Beethoven.
"	1	"Walküre," first act	Wagner.
"	2	Scena from "Götterdammerung"	Wagner.
"	–	Concerto (piano)	Saint-Saëns.
"	–	Concerto (piano)	Bronsart.
1877–78.	1	Symphony No. 1	Brahms.

First Time.	No. of Times.	Title.	Composer.
1877–78.	1	Symphony No. 2	Rubinstein.
"	1	Serenade	Volkmann.
"	1	Variations, Thema by Haydn	Brahms.
1878–79.	1	Symphony No. 2	Brahms.
"	1	Hunnenschlacht	Liszt.
"	1	Fantasia: "Francesca di Rimini"	Tschaikowsky.
"	1	Symphony No. 3	Tschaikowsky.
1879–80.	1	Symphony No. 4	Rubenstein.
"	1	Walküre Ritt und Siegfrieds Tod	Wagner.
"	1	Götterdammerung, third act	Wagner.
"	–	Concerto (piano)	Tschaikowsky.

During the first seven seasons, U. C. Hill, H. C. Timm, W. Alpers, G. Loder, L. Wiegers, D. G. Etienne, A. Boucher, acted alternately as conductors. In 1849 Eisfeld was chosen sole conductor. On April 21, 1855, Bergmann conducted the society for the first time, and did so alternately with Eisfeld until the season of 1865–66, when this gentleman resigned. Bergmann then filled the position until 1876, when Dr. Damrosch succeeded him. The next season Thomas was appointed, the following season Neuendorf conducted, and in 1879 Thomas re-appeared on the scene.

PRESIDENTS OF THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

Hill, U. C.	1842–47	Stebbins, H. G.	1874–75
Timm, H. C.	1847–64	Schermerhorn, E. H.	1875–79
Scharfenberg, W.	1864–67	Hallgarten, J.	1879–81
D. Doremus	1867–70	Drexel, J. W.	1881–87
Strong, G. T.	1870–74	Hyde, F. B.	1887–

Following is a list of vocal and instrumental soloists who have appeared in the concerts of the Philharmonic Society from its first season up to our time. As most

of the distinguished artists who visited America during the existence of the Philharmonic Society played at its concerts, this list will show the years when those artists were here, as well as the appearance of some of the home talent. The figure accompanying a name signifies the number of times a soloist appeared at the Philharmonic concerts.

1842. Mme. Otto, Soprano, 2; Ch. E. Horn, ; Wm. Scharfenberg, Piano, 5; A. Boucher, 'Cello; H. C. Timm, P. 7; Mrs. Loder, Alto, 2.

1843. Signora Castellan, S.; H. Vieuxtemps, Violin.

1844. Signora Ricci, ; Signor Sanquiro, ; Mme. Arnault, S.

1845. Mme. Lazare, ; H. Wollenhaupt, P.; T. Burke, V. 5; Miss Northal, S.; J. Kyle, Flute; A. & H. B. Dodworth, Cornet.

1848. R. Hoffman, P. 17; Fr. Haase, Trumpet; H. Schmitz, Horn, 2; Distin & Sons, C.

1850. T. Benedict, P.; J. Noll, V. 2; G. Bristow, P.; Fr. Rietzel, F.; Mme. Bouchelle.

1851. H. Appy, V.; O. Goldschmidt, P.; Mme. Saar, 2.

1852. Mrs. Tourny; Paul Julien, V.; A. Gockel, P.

1853. Aptommas, Harp, 2; Mme. Bostwick; Miss M. Brainard, 3; Mr. Eltz, Bassoon, 2; Mr. & Mrs. Wallace, P.

1854. Miss Lehmann, S.; L. Schreiber, C. 3; G. Satter, P. 2; W. Mason, P. 5; C. Urso, V. 7.

1855. O. Feder, Basso; the Brothers Mollenhauer, V.; Signor Badiali, B.

1856. Mr. Dochler, V.; Mme. Lagrange, 2; R. Goldbeck, P. 3; Mme. Johannsen; M. Gottschalk, P.; Ed. Guion, P. 2; Mme. de Roade, P.

1857. Miss Milner, S.; H. Mollenhauer, 'Cello; Signor Labocetta; Mme. J. Graever, P. 3; Sig. Gassier, Baritone; Mme. D'Angri, Contralto; Mr. Kiefer, Clarinet; Mr. Cooper, V.

1858. Ph. Meyer, Basso; Br. Wollenhaupt, V. 2; S. B. Mills, P. 20.

1859. Mr. Stigelli; Arthur Napoleon, V.; Mme. Colson, S.

1860. Mme. Schroeder-Dümler, S.; Fr. Bergner, 'Cello, 8.

1861. Miss Fay, S.; Sig. Centimeri, Bar. 3; Ed. Mollenhauer,

V. 3; E. Hartmann, P.; Miss Ludecus, S.; Mr. Letsch, Trombone.

1862. J. A. Thomas, Basso; Mr. Perring, T. 2.

1863. Miss C. L. Kellogg, S. 3; Miss Lorini, S.; G. Hermanns, Basso; Mme. Rotter, S.; Mr. Lotti, T.

1864. Th. Thomas, V. 2.

1865. Jehin Prume, V.; Senorita Poch, S.

1866. Miss Seelig, S.; C. Wolfsohn, P.; Miss Groschel; Wenzel Kopta, V.

1867. Alide Topp, P. 2; Parepa-Rosa, 2.

1868. Adelaide Phillipps, A.; Ole Bull, V. 2; Mme. Gazzaniga; Ch. Jarvis, P.

1869. Miss Mehlig, P. 2; Mrs. Davison, P.; Carl Rosa, V.

1870. Rosa Czillag, S.; Miss L. Lichtmay, S.; Marie Krebs, P.; Ed. Boehm, Clarinet; Dr. L. Damrosch, V. 3.

1871. Mrs. Gülager, S. 2; Mr. D. Bruckner, P.; Señor Sarasate, V.; Fr. Remmertz, Basso, 3.

1872. A. Rubinstein, P.; Miss A. Drasdil, Contralto, 3; Bruno Walter, V.; H. Wieniawsky, V. 2.

1873. E. Schriever, V.; Ilma di Murska, S. 2.

1874. Mlle. Donatio, S.; Miss Luckhart, P. 2; Miss Rosburgh, S.; Mme. Auerbach, P.

1875. J. White, V.; Mme. Pappenheim, S.; Mrs. Rivé-King, 2.

1876. Mr. Lang, P.; Miss Hubbell, S. 2.

1877. Miss Milde, S.

1878. Sig. Galassi, Basso, 2; Ed. Remenyi, V.; Minnie Hauck, S.; Fr. Rummel, P. 2; Mme. Groesler-Heim, P. 2; Herr Wilhelmj, V.

1879. Mr. Hermann Rietzel, P.; Rafael Joseffy, P. 6; Sig. Campanini.

1880. Miss Winant, A.; Mr. Chr. Fritsch, T.

Very few soloists have since appeared in the concerts of the society; whole programmes are often composed without the introduction of a solo singer or solo performer. Besides a few of the best singers of the German Opera, the pianists Carl Baermann, Aus der Ohe, Carl Faelton, the 'cellist Friedrich Giese, and the violinist Maud Powel, have made their first appearance there.

Carl Bergmann, the late meritorious conductor of the Philharmonic Society, was born at Ebersbach, Saxony, in 1821. He received a good education, and was destined to become a schoolmaster; but, as music was more congenial to his nature, he chose the career of a professional musician. He played in different bands, and learned to become proficient on most orchestral instruments, as well as on the pianoforte. He also studied composition under A. Hesse, at Breslau. In 1850 he came to the United States, and subsequently became conductor of the Germania Orchestra. After the disbanding of that organization, he settled in New York, and became a member of the Philharmonic Society. Bergmann, from the time of his appointment as the conductor of the Germania to his death, was one of the most conspicuous musical characters, and, when at the height of his American career, the most respected and admired musical leader in the country. He was artistically very intelligent, of a fine musical organization to the tips of his fingers, — perhaps too exclusively a musician, — yet a man of progress, with a fine poetical perception, an exceptionally quick ear; and, as he was an experienced practical orchestra-player, he was well qualified to teach and lead others. When on the conductor's stand, his gestures were graceful, his movements easy; his beat was distinct and sure; there was no hesitation, no affectation, about his manner; he was always absorbed by his work: in short, he beat time for his band, and *not* for the audience. He early became an adherent to the modern musical movement so conspicuously prepared by R. Schumann and his young "Brauseköphe" colleagues, and continued, though materially changed, by Liszt and Wagner. It was, in fact,

Bergmann who first introduced into this country, and created an interest for, the works of those masters. A programme of a Germania concert given Dec. 3, 1853, was composed of ten numbers, of which *five* were by Richard Wagner: the overtures to "Rienzi" and "Tannhäuser," and selections from "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin." Bergmann was then conductor of that society. He did not play these works with the intention merely of bringing forward novelties, but from a conviction that he was promoting the new art-aspirations engendered by the modern art-spirit. But all these fine artistic qualities of the great conductor were often defaced by — so to say — an inborn indolence, which at times, when energetic labor and exertion were imperiously required, got the better of him. All his musical acquirements had come early into his possession; therefore he did not feel the necessity for hard work, and was no friend of continual study. He was, perhaps, too fond of "genial loafing" with congenial companions; but he was also very unworldly, and did not know, or did not care to exploit, his artistic successes in order to reap material benefit from them. As long as he possessed physical strength, his imperfections were not conspicuous; but, when his strength began to decline, his power and influeuce began to decline also. Towards the latter part of his life Bergmann became very much discouraged, and even despondent. In the evening of his life — he was only fifty-five years old when he died — he stood nearly alone, and ended his days in the German hospital in New York, deserted and almost forgotten. Carl Bergmann will always occupy a conspicuous place in the history of true musical development in the United States, and also in the memory of

those who enjoyed the many fine orchestral concerts given under his direction. He died Aug. 16, 1876.

Among musicians, none is more intimately connected with, and has been longer in the service of, true musical art-culture, as developed during the last fifty years in the city of New York, than Mr. Henry C. Timm, born in Hamburg, Germany, July 11, 1811. He was a pupil of Methfessel and Jacob Schmitt, and came to the United States in 1835. He made his first appearance as pianist, in the old Park Theatre; he then played Hummel's Rondo Brillant in A.

Hummel, at that epoch, was still considered the most eminent master of pianoforte-playing, and a classical composer of pianoforte music; he was the musical oracle whom all young pianistic aspirants to fame consulted and studied. At the epoch Mr. Timm came to America, and considerable time after, Hummel's pianoforte music was much played by the few able pianists living then in New York. Mr. Timm, however, always was a progressive artist; he first played at the Philharmonic concerts, besides compositions by Hummel, Mendelssohn's G-minor concerto (4th season), Chopin's F-minor concerto (5th season), Schumann's Introduction and Allegro Appasionato (15th season); Beethoven's concerto in C-minor, in 1847, at a German Society concert; and numerous other pieces at different occasions, and at different places. The following reminiscences, relating to Mr. Timm's musical labors in America, and at my request written by him for this work, will no doubt prove interesting to my readers:—

"My *dèbut* in New York was a decided success; there being at that time hardly any one to compete with me. I could have had as many pupils at $5.00 a lesson as I wished. But being averse to

teaching, and after an unsuccessful venture in concertizing in Newport, Salem, and New Bedford, with Mr. and Mrs. Morley" [the lady was the original "Agathe" in Weber's "Freischütz," performed on July 20, 1824], "I foolishly accepted an engagement as second hornist at the Park Theatre, and to play occasionally a piano solo on the stage. I became also organist at Grace Church (at that time corner of Broadway and Rector Street, opposite Trinity Church).

"After a few months, however, I became musical director of a dramatic company; the orchestra consisted of 14 musicians only. We went to Charleston, S. C., and played during a season of six months, such operas as Mozart's 'Marriage of Figaro' (Henry Bishop's version), Rossini's 'La Gazza Ladra,' and 'Cinderella' (R. Lacy's version), 'La Sonnambula,' and even 'Der Frieschütz,' and with the players in the orchestra! I had to write additional notes in both the wind and stringed instrumental parts, in order to cover the deficiencies caused by the missing parts. Yellow-fever during the summer months was, at that time, a regular visitor at Charleston, and I went therefore with the company to Buffalo; and after another season in Charleston we went to Baltimore, where I played, during the six months we were there, the organ at the Episcopal Church. But before leaving for Charleston again, a complimentary concert was given me at Baltimore, when I played Mendelssohn's Capriccio in B-minor, with a fairly complete orchestral accompaniment.

"A few days before the close of our third season in Charleston, the theatre burned down. This event would probably have had ended my theatrical career; but on leaving Charleston I joined Signora Velané, an excellent singer, and Signor De Begnis, the original 'Figaro' in Rossini's 'Il Barbiere.' He was still a capital buffo, singing such things as 'I miei rampoli feminine' from the 'Cenerentola,' and comic French songs with great humor.

"De Begnis one day wanted to lay a wager that he could sing Figaro's 'Largo al factotum' faster than I could play it. Having had to transpose the piece from C to B-flat, the continued passages in sixths in the right hand became extremely difficult and fatiguing; I then took some liberties with the accompaniment; De Begnis acknowledged himself beaten. I told him, however, of the fraud afterwards. We gave concerts in Norfolk and some other places in North Carolina, but made little more than our expenses.

"Disappointed at the results of my somewhat erratic career during those three years, I began to think that teaching would be more profitable. But, when returning to new York, I met Mr. Charles E. Horn, who was at the point of opening the new National Opera-House (corner of Liberty and Church Streets) with his opera, 'The Pilgrim of Love.' He engaged me as chorus-master, and to play the trombone in the orchestra when wanted. The opera, however, was a failure, and was soon followed by other operas. The members of the company were all good English singers; there was a full orchestra, and a fair chorus. After a few months the theatre burnt down. This being the third I had been engaged in, I thought I had enough of it, and determined to quit theatrical business and devote myself to teaching piano and harmony. I became organist at the St. Thomas Church, then at the corner of Broadway and Houston Street (also burnt down some years afterwards). I was organist for eighteen years at the Unitarian Church in Broadway, near 8th Street, and for two years at All Souls, corner of 20th Street and 4th Avenue." [I have given in another part of this work Mr. Timm's connection with the New-York Philharmonic Society.] "The work of the Society was a very up-hill struggle, both musically and financially. I remember one season when, after paying expenses, each member received $17.50 as his share. It was, however, rather a labor of love than anything else, and we persevered. I played the alto trombone, conducting occasionally, playing all the pianoforte accompaniments, and some concerto once during a season. We had, however, in the course of years, a gradual accession of new and very good members coming almost exclusively from Germany, so that after the eighth season I gave up my trombone to a much better player than I was. We also engaged permanent able conductors, such as Mr. Theodore Eisfeld, and afterwards Mr. C. Bergmann. So everything was gradually improving. I remember, among other things, a very exciting scene at the close of the last season of my presidency. It was at the beginning of our Civil War. The news of the firing upon Fort Sumter had arrived the day before our last concert that season. We had many thousand copies of the words of 'The Star-Spangled Banner' distributed at the entrance of the Academy of Music on the evening of the concert, with the request to the audience to join in the chorus; the audience was very large on that occasion. After the performance of the last piece on the

programme, the largest flag we could procure was led down from the flies of the stage, forming a background to the orchestra. I then led Miss Brainard, who wore a scarf of the national colors, to the footlights. After a long and tremendous applause, she began to sing with her fine voice the best of all our patriotic songs, 'The Star-Spangled Banner.' I shall never forget the almost wild enthusiasm of the whole audience when the chorus broke in; the waving of handkerchiefs and hats, the tremendous noise of the stamping of feet and canes.

"After that season, I resigned the position of president to the Society; however, I still played, for some seasons afterwards, pianoforte accompaniments and occasionally a concerto, until the time when so many great pianists appeared; then I relinquished playing in public altogether, and devoted myself entirely to teaching. Regarding the 'Tannhäuser Overture,' I think it was Mr. Eisfeld who brought it out." [Mr. Timm is mistaken; it was C. Bergmann who conducted it at the Philharmonic concert that took place April 21, 1855. I doubt whether the conservative Eisfeld would have been persuaded to bring out, at that time, any work by the revolutionary Wagner.] "Some of the violin-players complained bitterly of the fatiguing accompaniment of the 'Pilgrim Chorus' theme. They thought it was more than human nature could stand! Now-a-days the clarinets in some of our good military bands do it beautifully and with the greatest ease. The Overture took immensely with our audience. In fact, we had far greater trouble to introduce Robert Schumann's Overtures and Symphonies. The musical critics on the daily papers of that time even blamed us for bringing, every season, some doses of that *unmelodious* music, with dislocated rhythm, etc.; 'Why not play Haydn's Symphonies?'

"But, to come back to my own doings, I seem to have been for over twenty-five years a kind of *sine qua non* at all concerts given during that time, playing accompaniments to all soloists, both vocal and instrumental — I, modestly, may claim that this was my forte rather than anything else."

Mr. Timm's musical labors in New York, considered all in all, were those of a finely cultivated, intelligent, active, faithful, generous artist, who earnestly promoted, to the best of his powers, true musical progress, and

who taught his numerous pupils to learn to understand and appreciate the works of the best composers. Among Mr. Timm's numerous compositions (almost all still in manuscript) I will mention a grand mass with orchestral accompaniment which, were he an American born, would be found far superior to the ambitious attempts of most of our young musicians, whose greatest claim to distinction is that of being "native Americans." Among Mr. Timm's published compositions must be mentioned his fine setting of a second pianoforte part to those of Cramer's celebrated *Études*, to which the famous pianist Henselt had not composed a second part.

Another artist, who has greatly helped to form true musical taste and progress during his activity in New York, is the pianist Richard Hoffman. He came to New York in 1847, and has repeatedly appeared in the concerts of the Philharmonic Societies' of New York, and Brooklyn, in *soirées* of chamber-music, and numerous other public concerts. The following list of concertos played at the New-York Philharmonic Societies' concerts does not call for any remarks; these deeds are sufficient to stamp a musician as a man of the highest artistic aims, of a great technical accomplishment, and of broad musical culture: Mozart's D-minor, A-major; Weber's Concertstück; Chopin's E-minor; Beethoven's C-minor, and concerto for piano, violin, and 'cello; Mendelssohn's D-minor, G-minor, serenade and Rondo Giocoso, Capriccio brillant; W. S. Bennett's barcarole from F-minor concerto, and numerous shorter compositions.

Besides Mr. Hoffman, the distinguished pianist S. B. Mills appeared most frequently at the concerts of the Philharmonic Society (see list on a preceding page).

Mr. Mills came to this country in 1859, and made his *début* at Carl Bergmann's concerts, given then at the City Assembly Rooms (see Chapter XVIII.). He has since resided in New York, teaching a large class of pupils; and has played at numerous first-class concerts, and at chamber-music *soirées*. At the Philharmonic Society concerts he performed Schumann's concerto, Chopin's two, Liszt's two, Beethoven's in G and E-flat, Weber's Polonaise brillante instrumentated by Liszt, Mozart's concerto in C; Reinecke's in F-sharp; Henselt's concerto; Hans von Bronsart's concerto, and *Études* by Chopin.

Among native American pianists William Mason appeared the greater number of times at the concerts of the Philharmonic Society. At his first appearance he played Weber's Concertstück; and at subsequent concerts of the society he performed the two last movements of Henselt's concerto, Schubert's Fantasia in C, with Liszt's instrumentation, Norbert Burgmüller's concerto in F-sharp-minor, and Beethoven's concerto in G. Mr. Mason, after the discontinuance of his chamber-music *soireés*, very rarely appeared as a public performer. As a teacher of pianoforte-playing he has educated many pupils.

That, at present, most popular pianist, Rafael Joseffy, played, at his different appearances in the concerts of the Philharmonic Society, Henselt's concerto, Schumann's in A-minor, Rubinstein's in D-minor, Chopin's two, Liszt's in A, Beethoven's in G, Brahm's in B, Tsaikowsky's op. 23. Such artistic deeds stamp a pianist as one of the first rank.

In December, 1864, Mr. Theodore Thomas commenced his symphony *soirées*, thinking New York large enough

to patronize two orchestral organizations. There was, for a while, a lively, but, on the whole, beneficial, rivalry between the Philharmonic Society and the Thomas enterprise. Both had to make extra efforts to cater for public favor: on the part of each side a greater variety of symphonic works, both classical and modern, were presented. The performances became more perfect in their details and *ensemble*. The Philharmonic Society raised the number of the orchestra to one hundred players: Thomas, on extra occasions, also increased his band. The whole movement was highly advantageous to the progress of musical taste: lively emulation is good for art. Thomas was able to give his annual series of symphony *soirées* for a number of years, with tolerably good pecuniary success. In order to get an orchestra under his sole control, in the summer of 1866 he inaugurated garden concerts, thinking that New York, like Berlin, would be willing to patronize such undertakings. The venture was successful for a few summers, — as long as the enterprise had the air of a novelty, — but was afterwards abandoned. In winter Thomas travelled with his band through the States; renewing, though on a somewhat larger scale, the labors, and some of the experiences, of the old Germania. In 1879 the symphony *soirées* also were discontinued; Thomas having removed to Cincinnati, as director of the newly established Cincinnati College of Music. But, after an absence of two years from New York, he returned to that city as conductor of his former rival, the New-York Philharmonic Society. He has contributed much towards spreading a taste for orchestral music: his labors in this respect are now well recognized.

Mr. Thomas, in order to render his programmes as interesting as possible, drew from the large field of classical and modern orchestral compositions, laying particular stress on novelties. But, as was the case with the old Germania Orchestra, and the New-York Philharmonic Society, the instrumental compositions of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, proved to be his richest sources. After the general revival of Bach's works, Thomas introduced some of his orchestral suites: he also presented the works of the modern school headed by Berlioz, Liszt, Wagner, Brahms, Rubinstein, Raff, Saint-Saëns, etc., and numerous overtures and suites by French and German composers, besides lighter arrangements.

The place of the old Thomas symphony *soirées* is now occupied by concerts of the Symphony Society, established in 1880 by Dr. Damrosch. Thus the labors of the New-York Philharmonic Society, since its formation in 1842, have produced excellent fruit; and New York to-day is second to no other city in the world in the possession of able orchestral players, and in efficient orchestral organizations.

After the cessation of the Mason-Thomas Quartet *soirées*, public performances of this branch of chamber-music slumbered for a while; though musicians and amateurs, who admired it, cultivated it much in private. Later, some of the original members of former clubs established the "Standard Quartet" *soirées;* another organization, "The Philharmonic Club," formed itself, pursuing a similar artistic aim. Pianists like R. Hoffman, S. B Mills, F. von Inten, B. Böckelman, and others, gave occasional trio *soirées* and piano recitals, producing important works of pianoforte literature.

Among native American musicians, the pianist-composer *Louis Moreau Gottschalk* occupied a prominent position in the American musical world for some time. He was born in New Orleans, May 8, 1829, and went, quite young, to Paris, to study the pianoforte under Stamaty. He made a successful *début* at Paris in 1845, and afterwards went on a professional tour through France, Switzerland, and Spain. In 1853 he returned to America, to follow up his virtuoso career. He soon became the favorite pianist among his countrymen, and performed in all the principal cities in the United States, playing his own compositions almost exclusively. Though some of his pieces were charming, this plan was one-sided, and failed to promote the best interests of musical cultivation in a broad artistic sense. Gottschalk's too exclusive occupation with his own ideas and forms eventually produced mannerism and repetition, from the injurious effects of which his compositions deteriorated towards the last. But he possessed a fine *technique*, a beautiful touch, and an exquisite poetical conception, though inclined towards too great sentimentality. His was a thoroughly refined musical nature; but, in consequence of his one-sided art-practice, he missed the higher artistic importance and excellence which his great talent seemed at first to promise. He spent his best force while endeavoring to entertain musically inexperienced and uninspiring audiences. The transcriptions and *fantaisies* based on slave or Creole melodies, — such as his "Bamboula," "Banjo," "Le Bananier," — and those resting on Spanish melodies, claim the foremost rank among his numerous pianoforte publications. He died in Rio Janeiro, Dec. 18, 1869.

He found for a time many admirers and imitators among young American piano-students; but these, not possessing Gottschalk's originality, failed to obtain any lasting effect.

Next to the Philharmonic Society, the Deutsche Liederkranz is the oldest musical society of any importance in New-York City. Its beginning may be traced back to the fall of the year 1846, when a number of German residents of New York issued a call for a meeting in order to establish a German singing-society (male chorus). I have already shown, that between 1830 and 1840 there existed at least two German musical societies in the city. At the time of the issue of the above call, the "Gesangverein der Socialen Reform" seems to have been the only German singing-society; and it was, according to German custom, a Männerchor.

In January, 1847, the Deutsche Liederkranz was organized, a constitution was adopted, a board of directors chosen, and a conductor appointed. The rehearsals were held at the old Shakspeare Hotel. The society at once gave signs of life: it presented concerts to its members, and took part in German musical festivals. In 1850 it distinguished itself in Philadelphia. In this year Agricola Paur became conductor, a position he has since occupied to the satisfaction of the society. In 1854 one of those harmonious squabbles — periodical ailments with amateur musical societies — broke out among the members of the Liederkranz: a number of dissatisfied persons left the society, and established a new one under the name of the Arion. A most important step was taken by the Deutsche Liederkranz in 1856, when women were admitted as active members. This arrangement afforded the society efficient means for the cultivation

of more important styles of works than the small form of the male chorus: the literature of important works for male chorus is a very restricted one. Male choruses are really nothing but a gathering of one branch of the human family for amusement: sometimes political or socialistic motives lie at the foundation of such a society.

The financial as well as artistic prosperity of the Liederkranz has since that time increased. A number of works of all styles, both vocal and instrumental, are performed by it every season in the hall of the society's building, which is a new and imposing structure.

Here is a list of the most important works so far brought out by the Deutsche Liederkranz: Mozart's "Requiem;" Mendelssohn's "Walpurgisnacht," "Festgesang an die Künstler," "Lobgesang," "Loreley" finale, "Antigone;" Schumann's "Des Sängersfluch," Musik zu "Manfred," "Der Rose Pilgerfahrt," "Vom Pagen und der Königstochter," "Das Paradies und die Peri;" Liszt's "Prometheus," "Die Glocken des Strassburger Münsters;" Gade's "Comala" and "Kadamus," "Die Kreuzfahrer;" Schubert's "Chor der Geister über dem Wasser," "Die Verschworenen" (operetta); Meyerbeer's "Ninth Psalm;" Bruch's "Odysseus," "Arminius," "Das Lied der Glocke;" Brahms's "Ein deutsches Requiem," "Schicksalslied;" Hiller's "Saul," "Gesang der Geister über dem Wasser;" Haydn's "Schöpfung;" Hoffmann's "Melusine," "Aschenbrödel;" and numerous other male choruses. The present conductor is R. Hermann.

Those members who in 1854 seceded from the Liederkranz formed a new society, the Arion, devoted exclusively to the cultivation of male choruses: women were invited to co-operate only on special occasions,

such as the performance of an opera. Meyerhofer was the first conductor of the Arion. In 1859 Bergmann assumed the conductorship of the Arion, and produced Wagner's "Tannhäuser" for the first time in America; at the beginning of 1860, Carl Anschütz became conductor. In 1862 F. L. Ritter occupied that post. In 1867 Bergmann conducted again. In 1869 the society produced "Der Freyschütz" at the Academy of Music. In 1871 Dr. L. Damrosch was appointed conductor. The Arion gives a series of six concerts each year at its hall, and one with orchestra at Steinway Hall. The *répertoire* of the Arion consists of male choruses by Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Zöllner, Kreutzer, Wagner, Liszt, Bruch, Brahms, Reinthaler, etc.

The oratorio societies already mentioned — the Harmonic Society and Mendelssohn Society — continued to give occasional oratorio concerts until they both dissolved. Since their disappearance, a number of other choral societies have been organized; among which the Oratorio Society, established by Dr. Damrosch in 1873, seems to be the most active and most successful.

WORKS PERFORMED BY THE NEW-YORK ORATORIO SOCIETY UP TO 1880.

First Performance.	Title.	Composer.
1873.	Coronation Anthem	Handel.
"	Motet: "Laudate"	Mendelssohn.
"	Motet: "Adoramus te"	Palestrina.
"	Motet: "Ave Verum"	Mozart.
"	Motet: "And the Angels said unto her"	Lassus.
1874.	"The Messiah"	Handel.
"	Motet: "Tenebræ factæ sunt"	Haydn.
"	Mass in E-flat	Schubert.
1875.	Cantata: "Ruth and Naomi"	Damrosch.

First Performance.	Title.	Composer.
1875.	Oratorio: "Samson"	Handel.
"	Oratorio: "St. Paul"	Mendelssohn.
1876.	Oratorio: "Christus," first part	Liszt.
"	Oratorio: "Elijah"	Mendelssohn.
"	Cantata: "Walpurgis Night"	Mendelssohn.
"	Ninth Symphony	Beethoven.
"	"Paradise and the Peri"	Schumann.
1877.	Opera: "Orpheus," third act	Gluck.
"	Oratorio: "Judas Maccabæus"	Handel.
"	Oratorio: "The Creation"	Haydn.
"	Cantata: "Storm"	Haydn.
"	Cantata: "God's Time is our Time"	Bach.
"	Opera: "Fall of Troy"	Berlioz.
"	Melodrama: "Ruins of Athens"	Beethoven.
"	"Ein deutsches Requiem"	Brahms.
1878.	Cantata: "Alexander's Feast"	Handel.
"	Cantata: "Seasons"	Haydn.
"	"Stabat Mater"	Rossini.
1879.	Psalm CXIV.	Mendelssohn.
"	Oratorio: "Christus," first and third parts	Liszt.
"	Scenes from "Meistersinger"	Wagner.
"	Kaisermarch	Wagner.
1880.	Passion Music ("St. Matthew")	Bach.
"	"La Damnation de Faust"	Berlioz.

The cultivation of the different forms of vocal music in New York assumed great importance during this period. The decided inclination of the American people at large for singing was at first brought about, as I have shown in previous chapters, by psalm-tune singing teachers, and subsequently increased by the early introduction of Italian opera. This predilection for vocal art was greatly kept alive by the many excellent singing-teachers, especially Italians, who settled principally in New York. The study of Italian singing led many amateurs, who indulged in it, to the study of operatic music, and creditable attempts at private operatic performances, which further nourished their love and admi-

ration for vocal art. Another direction in which this *penchant* towards purely vocal music displayed itself in America was the cultivation of the forms of part-song, such as madrigals, glees, etc. This style of singing was a custom derived from English practice. English musicians first taught American singing-clubs the traditions of the true rendering of madrigals and glees. There were, during this epoch, several successful vocal clubs in New York, which gave *soirées*, both in private and in public; and the admirers of these forms of vocal music had many opportunities of hearing them very well performed. Madrigals by old English composers, such as Dowland, Morley, Ford, Gibbons, Weekes, etc., or glees by Stevens, Callcott, Bishop, Horsley, Hatton, Macfarren, Sullivan, and others, were given at these concerts; and the German part-song, for male voices, has also found disciples among American singing-clubs. An organization — the Mendelssohn Glee Club (Joseph Mosenthal, conductor) — devotes its exclusive attention to the latter form. There are also a number of recently established singing-societies which cultivate the study and production of the divers sacred and secular choral forms of ancient and modern composers. Besides these, and the two singing-societies, — the Liederkranz, and the Arion, — there exist numerous other German Männerchöre in New-York City; while the French population has a flourishing Cercle de l'Harmonie.

In the winter of 1869–70 Mme. Fanny Raymond-Ritter commenced a series of "Historical Recitals" (of vocal and pianoforte music) of a character entirely new and unique. Their object was not only historical but æsthetic; and their programmes were composed with the view of calling attention to unknown treasures of musi-

cal literature, combining these with others better known, and replacing the stereotyped concert vocal pieces -- the Italian air escorted by a modern ballad — with arias of deeper significance, fine *Lieder*, and the fresh, healthy, natural melody of the folksongs of various nations. These vocal numbers were relieved by pianoforte compositions of historical and artistic importance, and the separate concerts were arranged in accordance with the development of the musical schools of various nations which they illustrated. The vocal numbers were all sung by Mme. Ritter, a task for which she was well prepared by a rich and cultivated mezzo-soprano voice of remarkable power of expression, as well as by great musicianship and natural linguistic talent (she sang in six languages and several dialects). Her literary qualifications enabled her to add to her programmes explanatory notes, and versified translations of many of the folksongs which she sang to her own accompaniments, several of which she also arranged. The pianoforte numbers were ably performed by two of New York's best pianists, — Messrs. S. B. Mills and F. von Inten. At least two-thirds of the compositions presented at these concerts were performed for the first time in America; a possibility which only my possession of a rare musical library enabled us to realize. These recitals, given at Steinway Hall, were not only found to be attractive and pleasing, but so novel and artistically instructive that they excited interest and attention among musical connoisseurs all over the country: conductors began to arrange their programmes in chronological order; and historical recitals, more or less copied from our plan, with half a dozen or more singers and pianists in the "cast," have become a necessary

part of a city winter course or conservatory scheme of concerts, while several of the arias, first sung by Mme. Ritter, have become favorites everywhere.[1] Satisfied to see that her disinterested object had been fulfilled, — that of assisting to raise the level of artistic taste, — and disinclined towards a public life, Mme. Ritter did not care to follow up the path on which she had so successfully entered, and gave only three courses of these recitals: but they bore further fruit, however (if I may venture to say so); for my own "Students' History of Music" was, to a great extent, the result of the musico-historical researches which I made in the interest of Mme. Ritter's recitals, and that work eventually led to this also.

I subjoin the abbreviated programmes of one series of these recitals: —

Prelude, and "The Carman's Whistle," with Variations, *William Byrde.* 1591
"I attempt from Love's Sorrows to fly" . *Henry Purcell.* 1680
The Hundredth Psalm, set as a lesson for Pianoforte, *Dr. Blow.* 1680
"Song to Pan" . . . . . *Dr. Blow.* 1700
"Sally in our Alley," as originally written . . *Henry Carey.* 1715
"The Cat's Fugue," and Sonata in D-major, *Domenico Scarlatti.* 1730
"Alla Trinita Beata" . . . . . Composer unknown. 14—
"Dolce Amor" . . . . . *Cavalli.* 1640
Fugue in B-flat major . . . . . *Porpora.* 1737
Sonata in D-major . . . . . *Galuppi.* 1740
"O di che lode" (the Eighth Psalm) . . . . . *Marcello.* 1720
"A Serpina penserete" (from "La Serva Padrona"), *Pergolesi.* 1730
"Sumer is icumen in," Ancient English folksong.

[1] Some singers, however, singing the same arias from incorrect editions, credited them to the wrong composers. Among them Gluck's aria, "O del mio dolce ardor," from his "Paride ed Elena," travelled over the country as by Stradella. Mme. Ritter called attention to the error, in an article in "Dwight's Journal of Music," and the aria has since been restituted to its true composer.

"Bin fryli e werthi Taechter gsy," Old Swiss Wedding-Song.
"With all the Heavenly Host," ancient English Christmas-Song.
"Colin prend sa Hotte," Arab French Song.
Mazurka, op. 6, No. 1, and Valse, op. 64, No. 2 . . . . *Chopin.*
"Lisetto," Negro French folksong.
"Rosestock, Holderblüth," Suabian folksong.
Polonaise in E-flat, op. 22 . . . . . *Chopin.*
"Le Réveil-Matin," "La Fleurie," and "La Tendre Musette,"
Couperin. 1668
"Soyez Fidèles," Air from "La Mascarade" . . . *Lully.* 1660
"Le Tambourin, la Musette" . . . . . *Rameau.* 1731
"Rossignols Amoureux," Air from "Hippolite and Aricie,"
Rameau. 1733
Gigues in E-minor and E-major . . . . . *Rameau.* 1731
"Une fièvre brûlante," Romance from "Cœur-de-Lion,"
Gretry. 1785
"Je l'ai planté," Romance . . . . . *J. J. Rousseau.* 1762
Prelude and Fugue in D-major, No. 5, from the "Well-tempered Clavier" . . . . . *J. S. Bach.* 1722
"Es ist Vollbracht," Air from the "Johannes Passion,"
J. S. Bach. 1720–30
"Verdi Prati," Air from "Alcina" . . . . . *Handel.* 1735
Prelude, Fugue, and Capricio, from the Suite in D-major,
Handel. 1736
"O del mio dolce ardor," from "Paride ed Elena" . *Gluck.* 1762
"An Chloe," Song . . . . . *Mozart.* 1788
Sonate in B-flat major . . . . . *Mozart.* 1779
"Quando ti vedo," Roman Serenade.
"Se Amor mai," Sicilian Barcarole.
"Gramachree," Irish Melody.
Nocturne in D-flat, op. 27, and Mazurka, op. 6, No. 2 . *Chopin.*
"Why dost thou weep?" Hottentot Song.
"Margoton va-t-à-liau," French Dance Song.
"La Colasa," Spanish folksong.
Rhapsodie Hongroise, No. 12 . . . . . *Liszt.*
Air and Variations in G-major . . . . . *Beethoven.* 1801
"Wonne der Wehmuth," Song . . . . . *Beethoven.* 1810
Sonata appassionata, op. 57 . . . . . *Beethoven.* 1804
Ellen's Song (Words from the "Lady of the Lake"),
Schubert. 182

"Gretchen am Spinnrade" (Lied from Goethe's "Faust"), *Schubert.* 1816
"Des Abends," "Traumeswirren," and "Ende von Lied," from the "Fantaisie-Stücke" . . . . . *Schumann.* 1837
"Reiselied" . . . . . *Mendelssohn.*
"The Warrior's Death," Song . . . . . *Ritter.*
Moment Musical, op. 94, No. 1 . . . . . *Schubert.*
"Elsa's Ermahnung an Ortrud," from "Lohengrin" . *R. Wagner.*
"Angiolin del biondo crin," Romance . . . . . *Liszt.*
Etude, C-sharp minor, op. 25, No. 7 . . . . . *Chopin.*
"Schoene Wiege meiner Leiden," Lied from op. 24 . *Schumann.*
"Er ist gekommen," Lied . . . . . *Franz.*
Hungarian Gypsy Melodies . . . . . *Tausig.*

CHAPTER XX.

PROGRESS OF VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN BOSTON. — MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT IN OTHER EASTERN CITIES.

I CONSIDER the Boston Handel and Haydn Society and the New-York Philharmonic as the two greatest and most fertile sources whence the musical culture of the land has received its richest suggestions, models, and nourishment; yet some have pronounced the former society too conservative. One of the reports (1850) met this accusation in the following manner: —

"It is said by some, whose opinions it would seem ought at least to be entitled to respect, that the public demand novelties; and that, if the Handel and Haydn Society expects to be supported, it must produce something novel, something out of the beaten track, something that is good, something that will excite laughter and loud applause. . . . Are the oratorios of Handel, of Haydn, of Mendelssohn, all, all, to pass for nothing in these latter days of progress? and must we fall down to worship Italian opera in order to be considered fashionable, musical, and see no good in any thing else? . . . Away with such shallow arguments for novelties! They are the invention of the shallow-brained, and we will not heed them. Let us remain true to ourselves, and to the great objects of our organization, and we have nothing to fear, though a cloud may for a time obscure our pathway."

The Handel and Haydn Society has, on the whole, remained faithful to this art spirit; and the long list of

great works performed by the society, from its first beginning to 1880, is the best testimonial to its musical activity and progress.

LIST OF WORKS PERFORMED BY THE BOSTON HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY UP TO 1880.

First Time.	No. of Times.	Title.	Composer.
1818, Dec. 25.	74	"The Messiah"	Handel.
1819, Feb. 16.	62	"The Creation"	Haydn.
" Apl. 1.	3	"Dettingen Te Deum"	Handel.
1821, Feb. 6.	4	"The Intercession"	King.
1829, Jan. 18.	11	Mass, B-flat major	Haydn.
" Apl. 12.	1	Mass, C-major	Mozart.
" Dec. 13.	2	Mass, F-major	Bühler.
1830, Nov. 21.	7	"The Storm"	Haydn.
1831, Mar. 27.	1	"Te Deum," C-major	Haydn.
1832, Feb. 26.	2	"Ode to Washington"	Horn.
1833, Mar. 24.	9	"Christ on the Mount of Olives"	Beethoven.
1836, Feb. 28.	57	"David"	Neukomm.
1836, Oct. 2.	1	"The Remission of Sin"	Horn.
1837, Oct. 1.	4	"Hymn of the Night"	Neukomm.
1838, Nov. 4.	2	"The Power of Song"	Romberg.
1840, Oct. 4.	7	"Mount Sinai	Neukomm.
1841, Nov. 14.	7	"The Transient and the Eternal"	Romberg.
1842, Mar. 20.	9	"The Last Judgment"	Spohr.
1843, Jan. 22.	12	"St. Paul"	Mendelssohn.
1843, Feb. 26.	27	"Stabat"	Rossini.
1845, Jan. 26.	33	"Samson"	Handel.
" Dec. 21.	45	"Moses in Egypt"	Rossini.
1847, Dec. 5.	16	"Judas Maccabæus"	Handel.
1848, Feb. 13.	46	"Elijah"	Mendelssohn.
1849, Dec. 16.	7	"The Martyrs"	Donizetti.
1853, Feb. 6.	4	"Engedi"	Beethoven.
" Apl. 2.	6	"Ninth Symphony"	Beethoven.
1855, Nov. 18.	4	"Solomon"	Handel.
1857, Jan. 18.	3	Mass, Requiem	Mozart.
" Feb. 15.	4	"Eli"	Costa.
1858, Apl. 10.	18	"Hymn of Praise"	Mendelssohn.
1859, Feb. 13.	6	"Israel in Egypt"	Handel.
1863, Nov. 28.	2	"Ode on St. Cecilia's Day"	Handel.
" "	5	Overture: "Ein feste Burg."	Nicolai.
1866, May 13.	2	"Psalm XLII."	Mendelssohn.
1867, Feb. 17.	1	"Jephtha"	Handel.
1868, May 5.	1	"Psalm XCV."	Mendelssohn.

First Time.	No. of Times.	Title.	Composer.
1869, Mar. 27.	2	"Naaman"	Costa.
1871, May 13.	1	"The Woman of Samaria"	Bennet.
1874, May 7.	1	"Christus"	Mendelssohn.
" "	3	"Hear my Prayer"	Mendelssohn.
" "	2	"Psalm XLVI."	Buck.
" May 8.	5	"St. Matthew Passion"	Bach.
" May 9.	1	"St. Peter"	Paine.
1875, Apl. 28.	1	"The Seasons"	Haydn.
1876, Apl. 16.	2	"Joshua"	Handel.
1877, May 17.	2	"Christmas Oratorio," Parts I., II.	Bach.
" "	1	"A Song of Victory"	Hiller.
" "	1	"Psalm XVIII."	Marcello.
" "	3	"Redemption Hymn"	Parker.
" "	2	"Noël"	Saint-Saëns.
1878, May 5.	3	Mass, Requiem	Verdi.
1879, Feb. 9.	2	"The Flight into Egypt"	Berlioz.
" Nov. 23.	1	"The Prodigal Son"	Sullivan.
1880, May 6.	1	"Psalm XLIII."	Mendelssohn.
" May 7.	1	"Le Déluge"	Saint-Saëns.

The organists or accompanists of the society were Samuel Stockwell, S. P. Taylor of New York, Samuel A. Cooper, Miss S. Hewitt (Mrs. Ostinelli), Charles Zeuner, A. U. Hayter, G. F. Hayter, F. F. Mueller, J. C. D. Parker, B. J. Lang. In the early days of the society, and for many years succeeding, the president officiated as conductor, in accordance with a provision in the by-laws. The first conductor elected was Charles E. Horn, July 23, 1847–48. Charles C. Perkins, the president of the society, conducted during the season 1855–61; J. E. Goodson, elected Aug. 15, 1851; George J. Webb, Aug. 23, 1852; Carl Bergmann, 1852; Carl Zerrahn, 1854.

There are in Boston a number of smaller vocal societies, which produce a style of works not cultivated by the Handel and Haydn Society. These are the

Cecilia Society, established in 1877; the *Apollo Club* (male chorus), formed in 1871 (both of these societies are under the musical direction of Mr. B. J. Lang); the *Boylston Club*, organized in 1873, and led by Mr. G. L. Osgood. There was also a German society, the *Orpheus* (male chorus), which, at the time when Kreissmann was the conductor, enjoyed quite a good reputation. Vocal music in all its different branches is now diligently cultivated throughout the city.

The situation with regard to orchestral concerts was, however, not satisfactory to the members of the Harvard Musical Association. They saw, that, unless some effective means were devised by which the band-players would receive a guaranty for their services at a regular course of symphonic concerts, the community would have to depend on hap-hazard enterprises. At one of their annual dinners, in 1865, the association proposed to establish a series of six concerts, to be entirely under the control of a committee of the members of the Harvard Musical Association, conductor and orchestra to be selected and engaged, as well as the programmes arranged by them. The following points will designate the merits of the society's enterprise: —

"1. Disinterestedness: it was not a money-making speculation; it had no motive but good music, and the hope of doing a good thing for art in Boston. 2. The guaranty of a nucleus of fit audiences; persons of taste and culture subscribing beforehand to make the concerts financially safe. 3. Pure programmes, above all need of catering to low tastes: here should be at least one set of concerts in which we might have only composers of unquestioned excellence, and into which should enter nothing vulgar, coarse, sensational, but only such as outlive fashion. 4. The guaranty to the musicians, both of a better kind of work, and somewhat better pay than they were wont to find. It was hoped

that the experiment would pave the way to a permanent organization of orchestral concerts, whose periodical occurrence, and high, uncompromising character, might be always counted on in Boston."

This was a noble programme, entirely in accordance with that which prompted the young musical enthusiasts of Harvard College to form a society for the promotion of pure musical art. The orchestral concerts, according to the original plan, have since been given every season regularly. The work thus done by the Harvard Musical Association cannot be esteemed too highly; although the Bostonians, for whose benefit the concerts were organized, did not always appreciate, or adequately sustain, the efforts of these men who so disinterestedly and generously brought sacrifice of time and money in order to see the work of progress steadily carried on. The master-mind of the Harvard Musical Association was John S. Dwight. After the season 1880 these concerts ceased to exist. Of the new orchestral organization, the Boston Symphony Orchestra (conductor Arthur Nikisch), which has taken the place of the old society, I shall speak further on.

The principal instrumental works performed by the Harvard Association were symphonies. All the nine of Beethoven; twelve by Haydn; six by Mozart; "Die Weihe der Töne," by Spohr; that in C and the unfinished one by Schubert; Italian, Scotch, and "Reformation," by Mendelssohn; the four, and overture, scherzo, and finale, of Schumann; Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 by Gade; two by Raff; two by Brahms; "Ocean" by Rubinstein; Symphonie Fantastique by Berlioz; No. 2 by Saint-Saëns; two by Paine; No. 2 by Ritter; Posthumous, by Goetz; Liszt's "Tasso" and "Les Préludes;" first suite by Lachner; suite in C by Raff;

"Irdisches und Göttliches" for double orchestra, by Spohr; overtures by Gluck, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Cherubini, Schubert, Weber, Schumann, Gade, Bennett, Bargiel, Buck, Goldmark, Paine, Chadwick, Parker, Henschel, Rietz, etc., and numerous concertos for piano and violin.

Chamber-music is now much cultivated in Boston, both by private and professional clubs; next to the old Mendelssohn Quintet Club, the Beethoven Quintet Club, formed in 1873, seems to be the most successful.

One of the most efficient organizations in the Eastern States is the Worcester County Musical Association of Worcester, Mass. This association is the outgrowth of those musical conventions formerly held in different places for the promotion of church-music. The first convention held in the city of Worcester took place in 1858. The music sung at this convention consisted of psalm-tunes, and a light, sentimental cantata "The Burning Ship." For five or six years following, the conventions were annually held, either under private management or that of the Mozart Society, a local organization at that time. In 1863 the present county organization was formed. It was not, however, until 1865 that an attempt was made to perform more important works than merely psalm-tunes and easy, sentimental, amateurish cantatas. In that year a part of the "Creation" was produced. From then steady progress was made; and such works as Mendelssohn's "Elijah;" Rossini's "Stabat Mater;" Handel's "Samson," "Judas Maccabæus," "The Messiah," "Joshua," "L' Allegro ed il Penseroso;" Haydn's "Creation," Verdi's "Requiem," Gounod's "Messe Solenelle," besides a number of smaller works, were performed. The best solo artists, both

instrumental and vocal, are secured for these annual festival concerts. The chorus now consists of four hundred and seventy-five members, recruited from the different towns of the country. Carl Zerrahn, the present conductor, has held this position since 1866. The society is well managed, both in its musical and financial affairs, and may apparently look forward to a bright future.

In some other Eastern cities, the cultivation principally of sacred music, cantatas, and oratorios, has been pursued by musical societies, which have often done good work. In Portland (Me.) Mr. Kotschmar organized different societies, doing good service to musical art in that section of the country. In Springfield (Mass.), in Burlington (Vt.), in New Haven (Dr. Stoeckel), in Hartford, and in places in the neighborhood of Boston, occasional oratorio concerts take place. In the more southern cities, especially those in the neighborhood of New York, concerts consisting of both vocal and instrumental music have been frequently given during the winter season. In many of these places, permanent musical societies have been formed.

The local history of Philadelphia's musical culture does not present any salient original points; it is in this respect far behind Boston and New York. It may, with some justice, be said that Philadelphia was from the time when English operas were first sung in America (see Chap. VIII.) up to our own, in a musical sense, a suburban town to New York. That large and rich city — possessing over a million of inhabitants — never takes and never has taken any initial steps towards the encouragement and advancement of musical art on a large modern scale. Philadelphia depends on the enter-

prise of New York's musical managers. New York operatic companies, New York orchestral organizations provide Philadelphia with some more or less artistic performances. At the great centennial exhibition held in 1876 at Philadelphia the art of music played a very wretched *rôle;* Philadelphians did not care for it; the strangers who visited the exhibition did not look for it.

To be sure, during the second part of last century, when, on the basis of English practice, musical culture was beginning to send out a few timid roots into American soil, Philadelphia endeavored to keep pace with Boston and New York. One of the first hymn-books was even published in Philadelphia (see Chap. II.). Some able musical pioneers immigrated from Europe at the beginning of this century, settled in Philadelphia, and probably the first American concert, mentioned in a European German musical paper, took place in Philadelphia. I translate from Cramer's "Magazin für Musik" for 1784 the following notice of the affair: —

"Philadelphia, December, 1783. — Among the many strangers lately arrived here are several musicians from Hamburg as well as from other places. These, some time, established a well organized concert (band?). Lately a grand and successful concert was arranged in honor of General Washington, which was to close with the singing of an ode in praise of him, but when the general was informed of this he, out of modesty, would not wait, but left the concert before the performance of the ode."

There is mention of another concert at about that epoch, as follows: —

"On Thursday, the 4th of May, at the Reformed German Church in Race Street, was performed a Grand Concert of vocal and instrumental music, in the presence of a numerous and polite audience. The whole *Band* consisted of 230 vocal and 50 instrumental per-

formers, which, we are fully justified in pronouncing, was the most complete, both with respect to numbers and accuracy of execution, ever, on any occasion, combined in this city, and, perhaps throughout America.

"The first idea of this concert was suggested to the trustees of the musical institution by the *Commemoration of Handel* in London, and the *Sacred Concert* in Boston" (of this the programme is given on a preceding page).

The most important among the old musical societies of Philadelphia was the "Musical Fund Society." It was established Feb. 20, 1820. The objects of the society were, "first, to cultivate and diffuse a musical taste; and secondly, to afford relief to its necessitous professional members and their families." To attain the first laudable object, the society struggled bravely, but, on account of the indifference on the part of the inhabitants of the "City of Brotherly Love," and in order not to become utterly bankrupt, and thus also fail to be able to fulfil its second object, the "Musical Fund Society" concluded, in 1857, to stop giving public concerts. With the right home encouragement this society might have acquired much importance among great American musical societies, and exercised a wholesome musical influence not alone in Philadelphia, but throughout the State of Pennsylvania with the same effect as the Boston Handel and Haydn Society was able to do throughout New England, and the New-York Philharmonic Society throughout the country.

The Musical Fund Society began well, and, when organized, undoubtedly hoped for a, in a musical sense, long and useful career. I will mention some of the principal points of the artistic labors of the Musical Fund Society. Here is the programme of the first concert:—

MUSICAL FUND SOCIETY

OF PHILADELPHIA.

FIRST CONCERT,

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND.

The public are respectfully informed that the First Concert for the Benefit of the Fund will be given at the Grand Saloon, Washington Hall, on Tuesday, 24th April, 1821.

Conductors — Messrs. B. Carr, B. Cross, P. Gilles, C. F. Hupfeld, T. Loud, G. Schetky.

PLAN OF THE CONCERT.

PART FIRST.

Overture — De l'Opéra, Les Deux Aveugles de Tolède, full orchestra	*Méhul.*
Chorus — See, the Conquering Hero comes . .	*Handel.*
Concerto Violoncello — Mr. Gilles	*Platel.*
Glee and Chorus — Awake, Eolian Lyre, with orchestra accompaniments, by B. Carr	*Danby.*
Grand Sinfonia in C	*Beethoven.*

PART SECOND.

Concerto, Violin — Mr. C. F. Hupfeld . . .	*Kreutzer.*
New Glee and Chorus — Sequel to the "Red Cross Knight," never performed in this country, with orchestra accompaniments, by B. Carr . .	*Dr. Clarke.*
Overture — De l'Opéra, Tancredi	*Rossini.*
Chorus — Te Deum Laudamus, full orchestra accompaniments, by B. Carr	*Graun.*
Grand Sinfonia in E	*Romberg.*

The Orchestra will consist of one hundred vocal and instrumental performers.

Tickets one dollar each.

In 1824 the Musical Fund built a music hall which was finished in December, 1824, at a cost of $23,547. On Dec. 29, 1824, the society gave a grand performance consisting of Handel's Dettingen Te Deum, and a historical ode, "The Landing of Columbus," the music selected from Mozart. This was a pretentious thing. It commenced with the overture to "La Clèmenza di Tito," then several numbers selected from Mozart's works, an air and chorus from Boyce's oratorio "Solomon," a Spanish hymn, and the rest selected from different oratorios by Handel. This incongruous posting together of different numbers from the works of different composers, called *pasticcio*, was done in imitation of a custom frequently met with in old English musical practice introduced by the Italians.

On March 7, 1833, the Musical Fund Society performed Rossini's opera "Moses in Egypt" and dubbed it an oratorio. Of other larger works performed by this society in the course of its public existence are to be mentioned Haydn's "Seasons," Feb. 28, 1839; Neukomm's "David," Jan. 23, 1840; Romberg's "Song of the Bell" (same year); Rossini's "Stabat Mater," 1848. The greater number of the concerts given were, however, of a miscellaneous character, comprising vocal and instrumental numbers performed by the most distinguished home and foreign artists travelling through the States.

An admirable plan on the part of the Musical Fund was the early attempt at the establishing of a music school, which, however, was, like all similar early efforts in America, of short duration. In May, 1825, steps were taken towards the formation of a school or academy of music, for promoting a more general knowledge of

music and supplying the orchestra of the society with skilful performers. In September the academy was formally opened, under a corps of competent teachers, with twenty-five pupils. The academy existed for six years, when, finding that its continuance entailed serious loss to the society, it was closed. But "guided by the experience of the past, it was deemed expedient to discontinue the regular concerts of the society, in order to carry out successfully one of its primary objects; namely, "the relief of decayed musicians and their families." Besides the above society, Philadelphia was the home of numerous vocal societies. It had its Philharmonic, its Sacred Music Societies, its Handel and Haydn Society, the Musical Union, etc., and numerous German men-chorus clubs.

The principal societies are now "The Orpheus Club," a male chorus, conductor M. H. Cross, established in 1872; the "Cecilian," also conducted by Mr. Cross. This society was established in 1875, is an outgrowth of "The Beethoven Society," and consists of over four hundred active members. The "Cecilian" does excellent work, and devotes its energy to the production of oratorios and other compositions of a high artistic character.

The "Philadelphia Chorus Society," conductor C. M. Schmitz, also exhibits much activity. But to enumerate all the different vocal societies of which Philadelphia is the happy home — over sixty are reported to exist there — would occupy more space than can be well spared here.

Since the days when the famous "Germania" (see Chap. XVII.) foundered in Philadelphia, repeated efforts have been made to establish a permanent orchestral

society, but so far with little success. Philadelphians seem to lack *esprit de corps* regarding home musical culture; there is no homogeneity in its musical activity; no desire, on the part of the public, to build up an able, efficient orchestral organization. Chamber-music *soirées* are given every season by the pianist, C. H. Jarvis, assisted by Messrs. Stoll, Schmidt, Schmitz, and Hening. Philadelphia's fine opera-house, "The Academy of Music," was erected in 1856.

CHAPTER XXI.

MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE WEST.

From Boston and New York, musical culture spread through the country among other Eastern cities. A similar influence regarding musical development in the West was, to a great extent, exercised by two Western cities, Milwaukee and Cincinnati. Boston, settled by English colonists, based its musical culture entirely on English practice, and remained for a long while faithful to the spirit of that practice. New York, the great cosmopolitan commercial centre, admitted Italian, English, French, and German influences: each had a large number of adherents. Here we find English church-music and the oratorio, Italian and French opera, German instrumental music, and the Männerchor. The musical life of the North-western city of *Milwaukee* was at first entirely under German influence. A large emigration of educated Germans had early settled at Milwaukee. Many of the more recent German settlers had taken part in the revolutionary movement of 1848 in Europe; but, disappointed by the political turn that revolution had then taken, they immigrated to the United States, and founded new homes in the West. They brought with them their love for poetry and music, and established singing-societies; for, wherever at least four Germans gather together, one may be sure

to find a Männerchor. In Milwaukee they founded, in 1849, the "Musik Verein" (musical society), one of the oldest and, for a time, the most influential organization among the Western American-German singing-societies. Hans Balatka, himself one of the German revolutionists, was its first conductor. In the Musik Verein the newly arrived German emigrant found a congenial, social, and artistic union. The professional musician and cultivated musical amateur sat side by side, each doing his best to make the society a musical centre; for the Musik Verein, modelled upon those societies found in every European German city of any importance, was, to those German Milwaukeeans, an ideal link between the fatherland beyond the Atlantic Ocean and their new American homes. The elements of which the Musik Verein was composed were many-sided: there were to be found that German indigenous growth the Männerchor (male chorus), the orchestra, the chorus composed of male and female voices, amateurs performing the different solo parts. The whole field of modern musical forms was cultivated by those enthusiastic German colonists: the male-chorus glee, the cantata, the oratorio, the opera, chamber-music in its divers forms, the overture, the symphony, were placed on the programmes of this active society. Its musical life was a rich one, and its influence through the West was of great bearing on a healthy musical development.

The Milwaukee Musik Verein, in the course of its existence, had, like all musical societies, its ups and downs, caused by misunderstandings among the members, or intrigues engendered by the chronic jealousies that enliven the existence of candidates for solo parts; or, as is often the case, by the bad financial situation,

the result of unexpected deficits entailed by some public performances. But, aside from these almost inevitable causes inimical to the success of a musical society, the work of the Musik Verein was a noble and inspiring one. Its first concert took place May 28, 1850. Here is a list of the principal works, both vocal and instrumental, performed by the Milwaukee Musik Verein since its first establishment. This list, a mirror of the labors of the society, speaks for itself.

LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL WORKS PERFORMED BY THE MILWAUKEE MUSIKVEREIN UP TO 1880.

First Time.	No. of Times.	Title.	Composer.
1851.	1	Parts of the "Messiah"	Handel.
"	5	"The Creation."	Haydn.
"	1	Parts of the Oratorio "Jesus in Gethsemane"	Rossetti.
"	2	"Samson"	Handel.
1852.	4	"The Seasons"	Haydn.
"	6	Choruses from "Elijah"	Mendelssohn.
1853.	5	Opera: "Czar und Zimmermann"	Lortzing.
"	5	Opera: "Der Wildschütz"	Lortzing.
1854.	5	Opera: "Der Freyschütz"	Weber.
1855	6	Opera: "Norma"	Bellini.
"	2	Symphony No. 1	Beethoven.
1856.	4	Opera: "Alessandro Stradella"	Flotow.
"	2	Symphony No. 6	Beethoven.
"	1	Symphony No. 5	Beethoven.
1857.	2	The Forty-second Psalm	Mendelssohn.
1858.	2	Opera: "Die Zauberflöte"	Mozart.
"	3	Symphony No. 2	Beethoven.
"	1	Opera: "Nachtlager von Grenada"	Kreutzer.
"	2	"Stabat Mater"	Rossini.
1859.	1	"Hymn of Praise"	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Musical drama: "Mohega"	Sobolewski.
"	1	"The Song of the Bell"	Romberg.
1860.	1	Opera: "Martha"	Flotow.
"	2	Mass, Requiem	Mozart.
"	2	Symphony in E-flat major	Mozart.
1861.	1	Opera: "La Traviata"	Verdi.
"	2	"Psalm XCV."	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Cantata: "A Night on the Ocean"	Tschirch.

First Time.	No. of Times.	Title.	Composer.
1862.	1	Symphony in G-minor	Gade.
1863.	–	Miscellaneous Programmes	
1864.	1	Oratorio: "St. Paul"	Mendelssohn.
1865.	–	Repetition of former works	
1866.	1	Cantata: "Lurline"	Hiller.
"	1	Cantata: "The Power of Song"	Brambach.
"	2	Symphony No. 7	Beethoven.
1867.	1	Symphony No. 1	Haydn.
1868.	1	Symphony: "Abschied"	Haydn.
"	1	"Midsummer Night's Dream" music	Mendelssohn.
1869.	3	Opera: "Fra Diavolo"	Auber.
"	1	Cantata: "Birken und Erlen"	Bruch.
"	1	Unfinished Symphony	Schubert.
1870.	1	Mass in C	Beethoven.
1871.	1	Symphony No. 4	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Symphony: "Ocean"	Rubinstein.
1872.	4	Opera: "Masaniello"	Auber.
"	1	Parts of "Judas Maccabæus"	Handel.
"	1	Symphony: E-flat, No. 3	Haydn.
"	1	Poëme Symphonique: "Tasso"	Liszt.
1873.	1	Symphony No. 4	Beethoven.
"	1	"Les Préludes"	Liszt.
"	1	Finale: "Loreley"	Mendelssohn.
1874.	1	Fantaisié for Piano, Orchestra, and Chorus	Beethoven.
"	1	Overture: "Sakuntala"	Goldmark.
1875.	2	"The First Walpurgis Night"	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Ein Deutsches Requiem	Brahms.
"	1	Introduction and Scenes from "Lohengrin"	Wagner.
1876.	1	Cantata: "Odysseus"	Bruch.
"	1	Ball Suite	Lachner.
1877.	1	"Das Paradies und die Peri"	Schumann.
"	1	"Melusine"	Hoffmann.
1878.	1	Symphony No. 1	Brahms.
"	1	Symphony No. 2	Brahms.
"	1	Symphony No. 1	Schumann.
"	1	Symphony No. 9	Beethoven.
1879.	1	Symphony in C-major	Schubert.
"	1	Oratorio: "Christus"	Kiel.
1880.	1	Cantata: "Der Raub der Sabinerinnen"	Vierling.
"	1	"The Golden Legend"	Buck.
"	1	"Elijah"	Mendelssohn.
"	1	Symphony: "Im Wald"	Raff.

The present conductor of the society is Eugene Luening. His predecessors were H. Balatka, F. Abel,

A. von Sobolewski, W. Tenzler, A. von Jungsest, R. Schmelz, and A. Mickler.

The population of Cincinnati is nearly equally divided between American colonists from the Eastern States, the descendants of Irish emigrants, and Germans. The beginning of musical development in Cincinnati, as emanating from the English-speaking side, may be traced back to about 1835. Eastern psalm-tune teachers, hailing from the classes of Lowell Mason at Boston, opened singing-schools in the rising Western city. Some of them became residents of Cincinnati, and instructed church-choirs and singing-classes after the manner of the Boston Academy of Music. By means of the efforts of these "Yankee" psalm-tune teachers, musical conventions after the pattern of those held in the East were organized in the West; Cincinnati forming their central point. From the church-choir, singing-school, and musical convention, the teaching of vocal music gradually found its way into the public schools. In May, 1848, the scholars of the first district-school of Fulton, now part of Cincinnati, held a sort of musical May festival. Other schools followed some years later. The geographical situation of Cincinnati made it a good halting-place for opera-troupes travelling from New York to New Orleans, and *vice versâ*. New Orleans, as I have shown in another place, then had its own opera-company, and was frequented by many travelling artists. Thus it came to pass that good singers often visited Cincinnati on their way East or South. In 1848 Mme. Anna Bishop and Mr. Bochsa gave concerts there. The same year the Steiermarker band entertained Cincinnatians; and the *pièce de résistance* seems to have been Gungl's "Railroad Galop," which said, a

critic, "is worth more than a trip to Springfield." This galop inspired another writer to say, "We have ridden forty miles by railroad after an engine whose clattering was harmony, and whose very smoke-pipe discoursed excellent music." As to the state of musical knowledge in the city, a writer of that day said, —

"In our travels during the last few years, in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky, we have found it to be the prevailing opinion, that in Cincinnati very nearly all — men, women, and children — must be acquainted with the science of music. But we are not quite certain that there is any more attention paid to music in the Western city than in the Western country. It *is* certain that in some sections of the country the people take more interest in music than in the city. True, there are many professors of music here, such as Mr. Werner Steinbrecher; some of distinguished merit, and some not very excellent. But it is also true, that few teachers are patronized as they should be."

A Cincinnati daily paper of 1852, speaking of the city's claims as a musical city, says: —

"This is a musical city — that is, so far as a desire to cultivate the science of music and the power to appreciate its charms can establish its claims to that title. Talent of a high order is to be found in its professionals and in some of its amateurs; yet, from want of a great essential musical association, it is not apparent to the stranger. . . . As far as we know, there is no society in the city, outside the ranks of our German friends; and we are cognizant of the fact that a desire for the formation of one exists in some of our professional musicians."

About that time the principal chorus society among the English-speaking persons of the city was the *Amateur Musical Association,* under the leadership of Mr. Victor Williams, an energetic and active musician. He also had made efforts to organize an amateur or-

chestral society, but with precarious success. This Amateur Musical Association produced the "Creation" and smaller vocal compositions of a light character. In the spring of 1853, counting for the occasion about one hundred and fifty voices, the society gave, in connection with the "Germania Orchestra," then on a concert tour through the West, Romberg's "Power of Song" and Ries' "The Morning." A little time afterwards the Amateur Musical Association disappeared.

The entertainments, however, which seem to have been best patronized by Cincinnatians then were the negro minstrel bands. At one time there were three different minstrel troupes there, each one playing before crowded houses.

The German colonists of Cincinnati, like those of other Western cities, established Männerchör societies, and gave their annual balls and concerts. In 1849 several of the männerchor societies from neighboring towns organized a musical festival (Sängerfest) in Cincinnati. The music sung at these German singing-festivals consisted at first solely of four-part songs, by such composers as Zöllner, Abt, Silcher, Kreutzer, Reichardt, Proch, Otto, etc. Instrumental music, aside from amateur violin and flute playing, was only represented by small theatrical bands, playing light overtures, *potpourris* from light operas, and dances. Pianoforte playing was, of course, much cultivated among ladies, who found some good teachers in their own city.

So far, Cincinnati's public musical culture had run in two distinct channels; one was represented by the peculiar views and teachings of the Eastern psalm-tune missionaries, the other by the German Männerchor societies. Not the least sympathetic artistic link ex-

isted between these two sections, so different and sharply defined in social manners and views.

The Catholic element, however, of which a very fine cathedral formed the nucleus, helped to contribute to Cincinnati's musical culture by frequent performances of the masses by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Hummel, Cherubini, and minor composers.

The above-mentioned American choral society soon dissolved, for want of support and efficient chorus-singers. Some of the more cultivated persons, among Americans as well as foreigners, deplored the utter want of concerts devoted to good music. Such was the condition of Cincinnati's musical life, when, in 1856, a very young and very enthusiastic musician, fresh from his studies, and lately arrived in America, invited a number of ladies and gentlemen to organize themselves into a musical society, whose aim was to be the practice and promotion of good music in all its highest branches. The new organization was called "the Cecilia Society." The young artist possessed, besides his youthful energy, a valuable musical library which he had brought with him from Europe. It was then the second best in this country, and, of course, of invaluable importance and help to the advancement of true musical culture among the members of the new society. The establishment of the Cecilia Society truly marked an era in Cincinnati's musical life. Though it was largely composed of cultivated Germans, it was not an organization representing one section of the inhabitants. Many of its chorus-singers were Americans of culture; and the subscription-list of membership contained the names of the best families in the city, — German, Irish, and American. On Sept. 19, 1856, the young society, counting about

eighty singers, gave its first concert, with the following programme: The Forty-second Psalm, by Mendelssohn; a cantata by Mozart; a chorus for female voices, from Spontini's "Vastale;" "Come, gentle Spring," by Haydn; and choruses from Schneider's "Last Judgment." With this concert, the Cecilia at once woke a new artistic spirit in Cincinnati. The next step taken by the young conductor was to organize an orchestra with such material as he could find. He gathered about him a number of professional players, and at once proceeded to establish, and partly to instruct, an orchestral school, intended to form an annex to the choral society.

The orchestra was afterwards organized as an independent body of professional orchestral players.

Among the works performed by the Cecilia Society, during its first four or five years, were the following:—

Vocal Works. — Haydn's "The Storm," "The Seasons;" Mozart's "Ave Verum," and arias and concerted pieces from his operas; Beethoven's "Meeresstille und Glückliche Fahrt," parts of the C-major Mass; Mendelssohn's "St. Paul," "Elijah," "Forty-Second Psalm," hymn for soprano and chorus, "Loreley," finale, and part-songs; Schumann's "Zigeunerleben," and solos and choruses from "Paradise and Peri;" Gade's "Comala," and "Erlking's Daughter;" Handel's "Messiah;" Romberg's "Song of the Bell;" solos and choruses from Weber's "Euryanthe and Oberon;" Neukomm's "Hymn of the Night;" scenes from Gluck's "Alceste" and "Orpheus;" scenes from Wagner's "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin;" songs by Schubert, Schumann, Franz, Chopin, etc.

Instrumental Pieces. — Méhul's overture "Joseph;" Boieldieu's overture "Jean de Paris;" Hadyn's sym-

phony in G; Romberg's symphony in D; Kalliwoda's overtures in F and No. 3; Mozart's symphonies "Jupiter" and G-minor, and "Don Juan" and "Cosi fan tutte" overtures; Beethoven's symphonies Nos. 1 and 6; and "Coriolanus" and "Prometheus" overtures; concert overture by Fr. Schneider; Gluck's overture "Iphigenia in Aulis." The works the Cecilia Philharmonic Society performed during its first season were: Mozart's overture "Zauberflöte," "Figaro's Hochzeit," and "Don Juan;" Beethoven's symphonies Nos. 1, 2, and 6, the "Egmont" overture, the C-major piano concerto, and the pianoforte quartet, op. 16; Boieldieu's overture "La Dame Blanche;" Weber's overture "Der Freyschütz;" Gade's overture "Echoes of Ossian;" Haydn's symphony in B-flat, No. 8.

These artistic labors were highly beneficial to the awakening of musical taste and progress among the inhabitants of the rising city, and also won recognition for its musical spirit abroad.

After the civil war a new American society — the Cincinnati Harmonic Society, Ch. Barus conductor — was organized, to give oratorio performances. Out of this society grew the Festival Chorus Society, which is now the mainstay of the Cincinnati Festival Association. The most conspicuous among the German societies of Cincinnati are the Männerchor — Otto Singer conductor — and the Orpheus. They are no longer exclusively male-chorus societies; vocal works of a higher standard, for mixed voices, being now occasionally performed. Though the city still seems to lack a permanent orchestral organization, yet a number of efficient band-players are now to be found in it.

In *Chicago*, musical societies were early established:

the German element sang its *Männerchöre*, the American its choruses of sacred music. When the Germania Orchestra was dissolved, a number of the inhabitants of Chicago even made a genuine effort to engage Carl Bergmann as conductor of a philharmonic society. The scheme, however, soon foundered. The field was not yet prepared for such an artistic venture : musical development still progressed in a desultory manner. After the great fire a healthy musical activity seems to have permeated the different societies that then sprang up, such as the Beethoven Society which, under the leadership of C. Wolfsohn, did, for some years, good service in the interest of choral music; but, getting finally tired of paying deficits after each concert season, the society ceased to exist.

The Apollo Club, W. L. Tomlins conductor, is now, to a certain degree, the principal vocal society in Chicago. It was originally founded in 1872 by S. G. Pratt, as a men-chorus society. In 1875 its present conductor was appointed, at whose suggestion and by means of whose labors it was transformed into a mixed chorus society. The Apollo Club consists of about two hundred voices. It has, during its existence, produced a number of important works, such as oratorios and cantatas.

Chamber-music is cultivated by several professional and amateur clubs. A large number of able orchestral players have settled in Chicago, and efforts have repeatedly been made for the organization of a permanent orchestra. There is a "Symphony Society," consisting of about fifty musicians, and conducted by Hans Balatka, which gave during last season a series of orchestral concerts. Report has it, however, that these concerts met with but indifferent success. There is

also a good band, under the direction of Mr. Rosenbecker, which gives concerts every Sunday evening at the Turnerhall; it has been in existence for a number of years. The able violinist, S. E. Jacobsohn, organized, about a year ago, an amateur orchestra, which is said to be doing meritorious work. Thus, in the direction of orchestral music, wealthy Chicago, with its million of inhabitants, is gradually conquering an important position; though it still has to send abroad to find a conductor to provide it with a short season of summer concerts. The efficient permanent orchestra is still wanting. New-York opera-companies begin now to turn their eyes towards Chicago, which, in the near future, promises to become a fruitful field for the interest of operatic enterprise; although the last experience of the New-York Metropolitan German Opera-Company, losing money as it did in a short season of opera-performances, goes to prove that Chicago melomanes are not yet numerous enough to make an operatic venture financially successful. However, Mr. Henry Abbey, who has once tried his luck as manager of Italian opera at the New-York Metropolitan Opera-House, opened the new Chicago Auditorium on Dec. 9, 1889, with a strong Italian company.

St. Louis presents many encouraging features regarding its home musical culture; it can already boast of a number of fine musical organizations, both vocal and instrumental. Altogether, an active, progressive musical spirit seems to prevail among the music-loving portion of its inhabitants. The first attempt at forming a musical society in St. Louis was made in 1838 by Wilhelm Robyn, a professor at the St. Louis University. The society was called the Philharmonic, and being under

the auspices of the University, the public accorded it a liberal support. The concerts of this old Philharmonic Society were well patronized. In 1845 the Polyhymnia was established by Dr. Johann Georg Wesselhoeft. The prime object of this society was the practice of instrumental music; that of vocal music was included, but did not take a prominent part. Good amateur singers were then rather scarce. The Polyhymnia's existence lasted about ten years. "The Cecilian," organized by R. Fuchs, and the "Oratorio Society," by Charles Balmer, were established at that same epoch.

In 1859 a new "Philharmonic Society" was formed by Edward Sobolewsky, under whose leadership it brought out some of the best choral works. Sobolewsky, born in 1804 in Königsberg, was a pupil of C. M. von Weber, and a composer of talent; he composed several operas, of which "Comola," produced under Liszt's direction at Weimar, was the most successful one. Sobolewsky adhered to the tendencies of the modern German school of music; but, failing to be successful with his own operas, he became jealous of Wagner, and wrote, among other pamphlets, one intended to be a partial refutation of Wagner's theories as brought forth in his "Oper und Drama" (*Opera and Drama*); Sobolewsky, in order to mark at once his point of view, entitled his pamphlet "Oper, nicht Drama" (*Opera, not Drama*). He was then Kappellmeister to the theatre at Bremen; but becoming dissatisfied in Germany, in 1859 he immigrated to the United States and settled at first in Milwaukee. There he composed an opera on an American subject relating to the War of Independence. The opera was in three acts, and entitled "*Mohega*, The Flower of the Forest."

The principal personages of the drama were the Polish officer Pulawski, who was killed at the taking of Savannah, and an Indian girl who, being in love with the hero, endeavored to save him, but met also her death there. The grandfather of Sobolewsky, who fought at that time under Pulawski, left an account of that historical occurrence. On the basis of this, the composer Sobolewsky constructed his libretto. "The Flower of the Forest" was performed in Milwaukee May 11, 1859, and, as report had it, was received with enthusiasm. Poor Sobolewsky flattered himself, at that time, with having created an American National Opera; but as there existed then no American National Opera-Company, his clever work sunk into oblivion. Sobolewsky afterwards moved to St. Louis, and settled on a farm in the neighborhood. He died May 18, 1872. The Philharmonic Society ceased to exist in 1870. Among the most flourishing societies at St. Louis are: the "Liederkranz," conductor Egmont Froehlich, with a membership of over six hundred persons; the Musical Union, an orchestral organization established by Mr. Darby, and conducted by A. A. Waldauer (this society consists of sixty players); the St. Louis Choral Society, established in 1880 by its present conductor, Joseph Otten.

Chamber-music, in all its forms and styles, is diligently cultivated by a new Philharmonic Society and by the Mendelssohn Club.

There are in St. Louis numerous German men-chorus societies, among which the Socialer Sängerchor, the Germania Sängerbund, the Orpheus, and the Schneizer Männerchor seem to be the principal ones.

It is impossible for me to name all the musical societies established in the numerous Western cities.

Even were I to know their names, and those of the brave, active musicians who so energetically toil in the interest of true musical culture, space would be wanting for the record. At an early epoch of the establishment of many of these Western cities, some intelligent, able musicians, whom chance had brought to those new places, were to be found, who sometimes, in spite of all possible discouragements, succeeded in infusing a spark of musical life into their surroundings. Often entirely thrown out of their real spheres by insurmountable circumstances, or, like the poet Lenau, attracted thither by a romantic longing for the free and independent life which they hoped to find in the virgin forests of the new Western Continent, these musicians encountered innumerable obstacles of all kinds. The inevitable adversities connected with the building-up of a new settlement often proved fatal to the physical strength of their natures. The tremendous re-action from former intellectual, artistic pursuits among an old and regulated civilization to the new, unexpected hardships of pioneer life, where every item of temporary comfort must be acquired or bought at the cost of severe privation and continual labor, threatened to destroy, in the immigrant artist, all desire for artistic occupation: the hand lost its cunning, the mind some of its usual æsthetic activity. It required a strong and elastic nature, both physical and mental, to resist the deteriorating effects of such outward strain upon the sensitive nerves of a person brought up amid a life of European civilization; and in many cases only great faith and hope in the future beneficial results of a newer civilization, based upon republican institutions, afforded compensation — often illusory — to the strug-

gling pioneer for all his sacrifices and privations. Many victims have thus disappeared. Others battled bravely, and conquered, inch by inch, a new field for the exercise of their art. They founded musical clubs, with the best means at their disposal, to relieve the hardship and monotony of pioneer life. This seed of æsthetic recreation sown in a new colony often bore fruit; and with the growth of a new city, as wealth and comfort of all kinds became more general, new art-elements were attracted thither to amalgamate with those already existing; and the inhabitants began to pay more serious attention to musical culture. And, as musical cultivation became more general among the inhabitants of a new city, concerts, that had been at first of rare occurrence, gradually changed into occasional, or even regular, series of fine programmes.

However, Western cities, on the whole, seem still content to devote the greater part of their musical energies to the organization of annual musical festivals. Although the establishment of such musical festivals has, in a great measure, promoted the spreading of musical cultivation throughout the West, and attracted into its current many persons who otherwise would not have had an opportunity of ever hearing fine works well performed, yet a regular course of fine concerts, enjoyed at shorter intervals, and with greater æsthetic repose, would be preferable in the end to the majority of earnest amateurs. The labor entailed by the arrangement of such large musical enterprises, in order to make them successful for the time, is too great, too absorbing, to allow the necessary leisure for artistic enjoyment. But, as long as one important element of modern musical culture — fine complete orchestral

organizations — is not to be found among the larger Western cities, concerts on an adequately large and liberal scale will be things of rare and irregular occurrence; the performance of inspiring, important compositions will be hap-hazard enterprises, and will only be possible at such musical festivals. It has already been proven, that in New York and Boston, where numerous concerts of all styles take place during a season, musical festivals can well be dispensed with. The refined, educated musical amateur finds, in the different courses of excellent concerts given during a winter's season in these cities, sufficient artistic enjoyment and progress; and does not find it necessary to expose his musical receptive powers to an overdose of great musical impressions, or to be obliged to listen, during a short period of five days, to half a dozen works of the first magnitude, beside a number of lesser ones. It often becomes, in such cases, a question of *too much* music; and the artistic aim misses its mark.

The oldest, and at the same time one of the most important, musical festival organizations to be found in the West is "Der Nordamerikanische Sängerbund" ("the North-American Singers' Union"), composed of German musical societies from different Western cities. The societies of this festival organization, formed on the model of the German male-chorus festivals, were at first composed of male singers only, and were, of course, restricted in their musical labors to the cultivation of glees and short cantatas for male voices. This one-sided practice gradually became too monotonous and uninteresting to progressive German musicians. So, in 1868, a change in a new direction was inaugurated at the Sängerfest in Chicago. An orchestra of one hundred

players was engaged, and a greater variety of choral works was produced. Since that time the annual festivals of the "Nordamerikanische Sängerbund" have become of greater artistic importance and influential bearing upon musical cultivation throughout the West. The musicians who have generally acted as conductors at these festivals are H. Balatka and C. Barus. Since the above date, up to 1880, this association has given annual festivals at Buffalo, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Detroit, Indianapolis, Louisville, Pittsburg, and St. Louis, performing the great works of old and modern masters with the assistance of famous artists, and a chorus sometimes reaching two thousand singers.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CULTIVATION OF POPULAR MUSIC.

THE people's-song — "an outgrowth from the life of the people, the product of innate artistic instinct of the people, seeking a more lofty expression than that of every-day speech for those feelings which are awakened in the soul by the varied events of life" [1] — is not to be found among the American people. The American farmer, mechanic, journeyman, stage-driver, shepherd, etc., does not sing, — unless he happens to belong to a church-choir or a singing-society: hence, the American landscape is silent and monotonous; it seems inanimate, and imparts a melancholy impression, though Nature has fashioned it beautifully. The sympathetic, refreshing, cheering, enlivening tones of the human voice are totally absent; the emotional life of the human being impressing his footprints upon the land he cultivates seems to be repressed within his bosom, or non-existent. The serious, industrious inhabitant of this beautiful land does not express his joys and sorrows in sounds; but for the bleating of sheep, the lowing of cattle, the barking of dogs, the crowing of cocks, the singing of birds, — the woods, the pasture, the farmyard, would be silent and gloomy. In an apparently taciturn, gloomy mood, the American farmer follows his plough,

[1] Ritter: Students' History of Music.

gathers his harvest, guards his cattle; or the mechanic sits in his shop; yet in their private life these people are not wanting in original humor and characteristic wit.

However, once in the year the landscape becomes enlivened by the sounds of human voices. Summer has come; and the "city boarder" appears on the scene, with his vulgar, arrogant, and frivolous rattle and shouting. Then the insipid, senseless minstrel-ballad, with its ambiguous meaning and trivial musical strains, frightens the timid thrush — this sweetest of American woodland singers — from his favorite groves. If the landscape was silent and sad before, it now becomes loud and boisterous.

The American youth has no sweet, chaste, pathetic love ditties to sing in "doubtful hope" under the window of the adored one. He buys that article in the shape of a brass band: if this does not go directly to the heart, it, at any rate, can be heard for miles around. The American country girl is never caught singing during her work, happily and *naïvely*, her innocent blushes betraying the presence of the God that has put all those sweet thoughts and melodies into her heart. Such music she does not consider fashionable. She gets her father to buy her a "pianner" in order to be able to strum on it the ballads the city-folks sing.

It is astonishing how such shallow ware quickly finds its way to the remotest corners of this wide country. One summer, during the time Offenbach's "Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein" was popular in New York, we went to spend the summer in one of the loveliest, most beautiful corners of the —— Mountains, — as far away from any piano or cabinet-organ as possible.

Great was our astonishment when, on arriving at the place we had selected for our summer stay, we were greeted by a rustic laborer's little daughter about eight years old, who rushed out of the house singing incorrectly the melody of "Le Sabre de mon père." The place, though one of the most romantic in the mountain range, at once lost half its sylvan beauty for us. The vulgar "sabre de mon père" crossed the brook, climbed the trees, drove the cattle home, sat on the hay-wagon, chased the birds: in fine, it was in the air of the mountains. It needed little persuasion for us to leave the place at once; the only consideration that determined us to stay was the apprehension of possibly meeting at the next house, not only "Le Sabre," but also "Shoo fly, don't bother me," "The Babies in our Block," or "Let me kiss him for his Mother," etc. Thus it seems that the American country people are not in the possession of deep emotional power; at least, they seem to be too conscious to allow that natural element of human feeling any outward expression. A happy, pure song is the emanation of content and deep feeling: it beautifies and embellishes the most modest home; it impresses upon the human heart and mind, by means of a wonderful power of association, all that is sweetest, happiest, and purest during a child's life at home; and the cheerful or pathetic strains that may have struck the fancy of childhood impress upon the mind of the human wanderer a remembrance of home and its happy scenes, with stronger and clearer touches than the brush of the cleverest painter is able to convey to his canvas.

"The power of song [says Fanny Raymond-Ritter[1]] is as deep as it is universal. It gives a liberal course to many noble enthusi-

[1] Essay, Some Famous Songs.

asms, wrongly defrauded of expression by the cowardice of conventionality. It enlivens labor and society, exalts religious feelings, transfigures even the crime and horror of barbarous war. It is this glow of truth and warmth that has given such an extended fame to many songs simple in outward form; above all, to the folk-songs of the European nations, pulsating with the very pulse of the people to whom they owe their birth."

How are we to account for this utter absence of national people's music and poetry in America? I do not consider the fashionable ballad of the "city-folks" as representing the people's emotional life, or an outgrowth of its natural poetical and musical nature. Most of those ballads are simply superficial musical illustrations of some passing social whim. Most of them are reprints of foreign (English) efforts.

Prof. M. C. Tyler,[1] in delineating the character of the first settlers of New England, says, —

"Closely connected with this great trait of intellectuality in them was their earnestness; which, indeed, seems to have been not so much a separate trait of character, as an all-pervading moral atmosphere, in which every function of their natures breathed and wrought. This intensity of theirs went with them into every thing, — piety, politics, education, work, play. It was an earnestness that could well be called terrible. It lifted them above human weakness; it made them victorious and sad. They were not acquainted with indolence. They forgot fatigue; they were stopped by no difficulties: they knew that they could do all things that could be done. Life to them was a serious business: they meant to attend to it. A grim battle: they resolved not to lose. A sacred opportunity: they hoped not to throw it away. . . .

"Above all, it was toward religion, as the one supreme thing in life and in the universe, that all this intellectuality of theirs, and all this earnestness, were directed. The result was tremendous. . . . Religion, they said, was the chief thing: they meant it; they acted upon it. They did not attempt to combine the sacred

[1] History of American Literature, i. 100.

and the secular: they simply abolished the secular, and left only the sacred. . . . So intense a light could but cast some deep shadows, suppressing sweetness and quiet in the human heart. At Plymouth a maid-servant of Samuel Gordon 'was threatened with banishment from the colony as a common vagabond." Her crime was that she had smiled in church. We read of a truly excellent minister, — one Thomas Parker, — who, hearing some young persons laughing very freely in a room below, came down from his chamber, and thus smote them with his sanctity: 'Cousins, I wonder you can be so merry, unless you are sure of your salvation.'"

From the hearts of such people, in whose eyes an innocent smile, a merry laugh, was considered a sin, no *naïve*, cheerful, sweet melody could possibly spring. This gloom and repression, excluding all innocent cheer and joy from the hearts of the people, have remained the fundamental traits of the majority of New-Englanders up to our day. Documents are numerous, by means of which we are enabled to trace the historical steps of the American colonist's intellectual life. His emotional life was stifled and suppressed: therefore there are no folk-poetry and no folk-songs in America; unless we consider those little glees, sung to sacred words, written by psalm-tune composers since the time of W. Billings, as such. To be sure, during the War of Independence attempts were made at writing patriotic songs: Billings himself, as I have shown in another part of this work, tried his hand at it quite successfully; but none of these early attempts made any lasting impression on the people. When the war was over, the war-songs sunk into oblivion: the grotesque, foolishly skipping "Yankee Doodle" — and history designates this as of foreign growth — had jostled them all out of existence. The fact that a people of such innate, exasperating

seriousness, at times bordering on gloom, has accepted a melody like "Yankee Doodle" as the emotional expression of their patriotic feeling, is a psychological problem. If a prize had been offered, open to competition among all the musicians of this globe, for the most melodiously insignificant, shallow, and trivial song, the author of "Yankee Doodle" surely would have received the distinguished award. The proverb "Les extrêmes se touchent" has never found a better application in the world's history.

There exists, however, in the Southern States of the United States, a people's-song in a most original form, — the songs of the colored race. Justly says James M. Trotter, in his book "Music, and some highly Musical People," [1] —

"The colored people of the South are proverbially musical. They might well be called, in that section of the country, a race of troubadours; so great has ever been their devotion to, and skill in, the delightful art of music. Besides, it is now seen, and generally acknowledged, that in certain of their forms of melodic expression is to be found our only distinctly *American* music; all other kinds in use being merely the echo, more or less perfect, of music that originated in the Old World."

Natural, *naïve* musical expression was all that was left to the poor, oppressed slave, in communion with his people. In such musical expression he sought relief for all those thoughts, sentiments, and feelings which his life of bondage had repressed in his bosom.

"And, if it were necessary," says Trotter (himself one of their people), "to prove that music is a language, by which, in an elevated manner, is expressed our thoughts and emotions, what stronger evidence is needed than that found in this same native music of

[1] p. 334.

the South? for surely by its tones of alternate moaning and joyousness — tones always weird, but always full of a ravishing sweetness, and ever replete with expression of deepest pathos — may we plainly read the story of a race once generally languishing in bondage, yet hoping at times for the coming of freedom."

The monotonous, gloomy history of the former colored slave in America presents him as a being provided with little intellectual life, save a certain prescribed, restricted form of religious rules verbally taught him by some one of his people, — and his own natural musical talent, giving expression to his emotions. Deserted and cruelly oppressed by the white man, his stern master, he placed his sole hope and consolation in the promises of eternal redemption and freedom after death; and the life and passion of Christ became the everlasting theme of his spiritual songs. These characteristic spiritual songs, with their often-repeated refrain or burden, possess a vehemence and intensity which are the passionate expression of this longing for that promised land of salvation and deliverance. Take, for instance, the song (I select at random),[1] "I know when I'm goin' Home." The melody is not one of the most original, but is highly characteristic in its declamation, in its contrasting motives, and its truthful melodic expression of the emotional meaning of the words. Or take "I'm a-trouble in de Mind:" what a truthful, natural psychological picture! The poor singer cannot get rid of "I'm a-trouble in de Mind." "I ask my Lord what shall I do," but the "trouble in de Mind" remains. With "what you doubt for?" he endeavors to soothe the "trouble;" but alas! it is too deeply rooted "in de Mind." Notice

[1] See Slave-Songs of the United States, one of the best collections of old slave-songs.

that characteristic expressive close, a cry of anguish and despair: the picture is tragical! Thus, *naïve*, creative, true nature seeks its own channels of original outward expression. In this case the poor, ignorant, debased, ostracized colored slave finds strains, original, sweet, and touching, such as nature has refused to his white masters. And so all through that collection, we find some remarkable specimens of original melodic elements. Every phase of the sad existence of the slave finds its records in those songs, as far as gathered. The following passages, taken from a correspondence from the South which appeared in "The Evening Post," gives a graphic picture of the negro's characteristic manner of singing and hymn-composing.

"Half the comfort in life of the negro of the Mississippi Bends is derived from vocal song, and no trait of his odd character is stranger than this. At other points crude and almost semi-barbarous, in the extent and intensity of his musical feeling he rivals the most civilized of nations. Music enters into every fibre of his being, — into his daily toil, his religion, his passions, his loves. But, while many of his songs are secular or even vicious, by far the larger part are those that pertain to worship. It may be said, indeed, that almost all his religion is a service of song. The preacher intones not a little of his sermon; the congregation accompany with a low melody during fully one-half the preacher's discourse; the prayers are often delivered to slow, monotonous music by female voices; and actual intervals of the service are unknown, for the intervals are filled by hymns, some of them so long that they give one a decided respect for the negro's powers of memory.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE NEGRO HYMN.

"While some of the hymns sung in the churches of the Bends are taken directly from the old hymn-books of the Baptist and Methodist churches, and some also from the later compositions which Moody and Sankey have popularized, by far the most melodious and interesting ones have originated with the negroes themselves.

Where the tunes have come from, is a mystery. Perhaps they began years ago as compositions of more cultivated minds, and, by addition or subtraction of notes, have lost all their primitive sounds. This theory, at any rate, accounts for the words; for often a negro hymn opens with a stanza or two which would not have discredited Watts; then, as it proceeds, it drops into the grotesque metaphors, the dialectical quaintness, and droll phrasing which prove it of plantation origin. As these later stanzas have been grafted one by one on the early structure of the hymn, the original lines — which appeal less strongly to negro feeling than those of his own composition — have been dropped; until the whole hymn has been reconstructed into one of a pure negro quality. There is, however, still another set of hymns, the words of which the plantation negro himself composed entirely at the beginning. They are usually short-metred, poetical descriptions of familiar Bible incidents, some of them of incredible length, and bristling with anachronisms. The blacks call this class of hymns 'figurated' from the Bible; and I have heard one which was descriptive of the battle of Christian and Apollyon, and consequently 'figurated' from Bunyan. No word, by the way, is a sweeter morsel on the negro tongue than this original verb, — to 'figurate.' It has the rotund and sonorous quality which the negro loves, and is used in a dozen senses, some of them quite contradictory of the others.

"How absurdly some of these 'figurated' hymns deal with the Scriptural record, a single specimen stanza from a very common negro composition here will illustrate: —

> 'In de days of de great tribula*shun*,
> On a big desert island de Philistines put John;
> But de ravens dey feed him till de dawn come roun',
> Den he gib a big jump and flew up from de groun'.
> O come down, come down, John!'

"If any thing can add to the anachronism and kindred absurdities of the foregoing, it will be the explanation that the John referred to is supposed by the negroes to be John the Baptist.

HYMN LEADERS AND SINGING.

"In every negro church here are two or three male and female singers whose voices give them place as leaders. They are proud of this prominence, and devote many of their hours to memorizing

the words and tunes. Their memories as to both are prodigious; and it is a striking proof of the hold that song has upon them, that often only with the utmost difficulty have I been able to get the words from them without singing. 'Can sing de hymn right off to yer, boss,' said one to me recently, 'but fin' it mighty hard to recite de words widout de tune.' The precision in time of a negro congregation is absolutely marvellous for so untrained a body. Every note is hit with exquisite accuracy; and in their antiphonal hymns, when the men sing a line and the women respond, the intervals are perfect. Though their tunes are very simple, and range through but a few notes, the wonderful flexibility of some of their voices produces almost the result on the ear of scientific singing; and no trained white choir can begin to produce the general effect of these negro hymns rendered by the men and women who have sung them from childhood. The rich voices of the famous Jubilee Singers are blended here with two peculiar tones that I have never heard elsewhere, — one a kind of nasal elevation of the voice as the male singer utters a most singular 'rasp' through his nostril, the other a female note pitched so high that it is more like steel scratching a slate than a human voice."

As the negroes of the United States are the descendants of different tribes that inhabit Africa, many original traits, underlying spiritual slave-songs, may be traced back to the primitive musical practice of those indigenous African tribes, at least as far as the scant records that are at our disposal permit us to judge regarding such musical practice. So far African explorers have, unhappily, not often been able to fix, in tolerably distinct characters, the melodies or musical sounds common to this or that tribe. Fétis, in his "Histoire Générale de la Musique,"[1] devotes a paragraph to the indigenous musical practice of some African colored races; but the conclusions he draws from his reasonings regarding the negro's capacity for the

[1] Vol. i. p. 27.

reception and formation of musical art are not sustained by the musical practice of the colored people of the United States; and yet we have, there can be no doubt, descendants of all the different African tribes in this country. Speaking of the formation of the brain of the different human races, Fétis finds that that of the colored race is inferior to that of the white races who have distinguished themselves in musical history. "According to the laws of musical capacity, based upon the formation of the brain, the conception of the relation of musical sounds can exist only in a most limited degree in a people so little favored by nature.[1] In order to strengthen his theoretical position, Fétis quotes a short passage from Capt. Burton's book "The Lake Region of Central Africa." Here is what Burton says of the African negro's (those he saw) original musical capacity and practice: —

"Music is at a low ebb. Admirable timists, and no mean tunists, the people betray their incapacity for improvement by remaining contented with the simplest and most monotonous combinations of sounds. As in every thing else, so in this art, creative talent is wanting. A higher development would have produced other results, yet it is impossible not to remark the delight which they take in harmony. The fisherman will accompany his paddle, the porter his trudge, and a housewife her task of rubbing down grain, with song; and for hours at night the peasants will sit in a ring, repeating with a zest that never flags the same few tunes, and the same unmeaning lines. Their style is the recitative style, broken by a full chorus; and they appear to *affect the major*[2] rather than the interminable minor key of the Asiatic. Their singing also wants the strained upper notes of the cracked-voiced

[1] "Suivant la loi de capacité musicale, basée sur la conformation du cerveau, la conception des rapports d'intonation des sons ne peut exister que dans les limites les plus étroites chez une race si peu favorisée de la nature."

[2] This peculiarity is also to be found in the slave-songs of the American colored people.

Indian performer; and it ignores the complicated *raga* and *ragini* or Hindoo modes, which appear to be rather the musical expression of high mathematics than the natural language of harmony and melody."

Of the East-African negro, Capt. Burton says, —

"Devotedly fond of music, his love of tune has invented nothing but whistling and the whistle: his instruments are all borrowed from the coast-people. He delights in singing, yet he has no material songs: he contents himself with *improvising a few words without sense or rhyme, and repeats them till they nauseate.*[1] The long, drawling recitative generally ends in 'Oh! ha!' or some such strongly nasalized sound. Like the Somal, he has tunes appropriated to particular occasions, as the elephant-hunt or the harvest-home. When mourning, the love of music assumes a peculiar form: women weeping or sobbing, especially after chastisement, will break in a protracting drone or dirge, every period of which concludes with its peculiar groan or wail. After venting a little natural distress in a natural sound, the long, loud improvisation, in the highest falsetto key, continues as before."

Certainly, as long as the colored races in Africa are deprived of the benefits of civilization, as long as their intellectual life lies dormant, and the lower animal passions of their nature only find an outlet, Fétis' theory about them may be accepted. But had he followed up the colored races, even to their degraded civil state of slavery in America, he would have discovered that they *are* capable of intellectual progress, and of original, characteristic melodic inventiveness, and consequently sensible to the relation of musical sounds. The elementary, so to say, embryonic, form of the music of the negroes, in its primitive, natural state, as described by Capt. Burton, lies at the root of many of the American slave-songs; but here, the embyro motive grows

[1] All this we find in many of the spiritual songs of the American slave.

into a well-formed phrase, into a distinct, rhythmically shaped period, and is, on the whole, formed with fine artistic instinct. The compass of the primitive, restricted scale becomes enlarged; the skips from interval to interval become bolder, and often very characteristic; the emotional expression, resting, in its aboriginal condition, only on three or four notes in succession continually repeated, producing monotony and satiety in the auditory organs of the civilized being, becomes, in the American slave-song, more varied and rich; the exciting, high chords, alternating with the touching low ones of the fine negro voice, are used with better effect, and often with much dramatic power. Thus the characteristic marks of the negro songs, as intoned in the jungles of the interior of Africa, still form the basis of many of the negro songs as heard in the swamps of the Southern States of this country. There we find simple recitative, often called shout, built upon a few unconnected words, — apparently selected for rhythmical reasons, — is interrupted by a more melodic burden, sung by the chorus. The predilection for the major key is predominant in the slave-songs.

Very few melodies, of those that have come under my observation in different slave-songs, are set in the minor key.[1] However, in some of those songs, the major and minor modes appear alternately with characteristic effect; for instance, in the "Resurrection Morn" the tonality wavers between B-flat major and F-minor.

[1] Mr. Theo. F. Seward, in the preface to the music of the Jubilee Singers' Collection, imagined that he had found the ancient Greek modes at the root of some of the melodies of the poor American colored slaves. Had Mr. Seward understood the ancient Greek modes, he would not have accused the poor Southern slave of such an impossible theoretical feat. The Greek tonal system was not exactly "a peculiar language of nature," as Mr. Seward says.

As Burton noticed, the negro is "an admirable timist." The rhythmical construction of his tunes is simple and correct: it is in harmony with the swinging of the body, the stamping of the feet, the clapping of the hands, the movement of the paddle of his boat, — movements which serve as rhythmical accompaniments to his song. The almost exclusive use of common time, to be noticed in the slave-songs, is probably to be attributed to their natural march movement. However, the song "Gold Band" presents triple time in a most characteristic form.

The melodic elements that lie at the root of the American slave-songs may be classified in the following manners: those derived from imitation of Irish and Scotch ballads, reels, and jigs, which the negro has heard on board the Mississippi steamers, at the dance-hall, at picnics; those fashioned after the Methodist and Baptist hymn-tunes; and those in recitative form, — the most original among his songs, — which are undoubtedly invented in the original African manner, though here enlarged, expanded, in a rhythmical and melodic way; some others, as invented by the negroes of New Orleans, resemble the French romance. Of these different classes of slave-songs, analyzed with regard to their natural harmonic ingredients, those imitated from the above hymn-tunes are mostly easily harmonized; common cadenzas, or closes of periods, like in those of the simple Methodist or Baptist hymn-tunes, also appear frequently in the negro imitation. Those that were suggested by the Irish and Scotch ballads and dance-tunes present more difficulties in adapting them to our modern harmony; and regarding the other class, which are decidedly of indigenous Afri-

can origin and inheritance, Mr. Th. P. Fenner,[1] who long and carefully studied these songs, justly remarks: "Another obstacle to its rendering is the fact that tones are frequently employed which we have no musical characters to represent."

Thus in these different slave-songs we find musical matter, composed of the most heterogeneous elements, moulded in the receptive mind of an uneducated people, to re-appear in most original, natural melodic forms, and afterwards performed by the same people with an inborn vocal art, in a quaint, but charming, original, effective, and, at times, agreeably fantastic manner.

A study of the melodic character and form of the vocal music of the American colored race proves that the negro's brain is capable of improvement regarding his conception of the relation of musical sounds. Nay, these songs even establish the fact that the colored natural singer possesses a true sense for original melodic and rhythmical formation; and the peculiar harmonic accompaniment or burden (refrain) of a song, as sung by the chorus, shows an inborn æsthetic sense of needful variety, in order to break the monotony of the long recitative. Hence we must pronounce the colored man as naturally gifted musically. He has, in his slave-songs, a rich store of original melodic *motivi* and forms, which compare favorably with many collections of people's-songs among the European races.

The negro of the United States is now a freedman, and enjoys the benefits of a higher intellectual education. A number of colored men and women have already distinguished themselves as singers and instru-

[1] Hampton Collection of Cabin and Plantation Songs.

mentalists, and some have even given proofs of talent for composition.[1] Although those pieces by colored musicians that have come under my observation do not yet show any marked signs of original inventiveness, — such as one would be entitled to expect in comparison with the slave-songs, — yet these colored composers exhibit, in their attempts, melodic sweetness, a good sense of harmonic treatment, rhythmical symmetry, and here and there touches of true dramatic power. It is, of course, too soon to expect the colored musician — who stepped only yesterday from his degraded state of slavery — to appear equipped with the difficult and manifold requirements of the modern white composer. The intellectual process he has to pass through, in order to assimilate the rich material of modern musical art, will be a long and arduous task. He now, like every beginner, learns to imitate the outside, formal construction of the works of finished composers; but years of patient study and experimentalizing must elapse ere he is able to mould the subject-matter, congenial to his own powers of inventiveness, into works of æsthetic importance and value, such as the style of his natural songs seems to indicate. Though the freedman has at present an unfortunate inclination to despise the songs of his race as a vestige of slavery (he endeavors to be fashionable, like the white man), this sad remembrance will, in course of time, wear away; and then, intellectually freer and broader minded, he will return to the heart-burning musical outpourings of his people when in misfortune, and discover unique forms of characteristic melodic expression, unmistakably national traits intimately belonging to his race. It will then be his

[1] See Trotter: work quoted.

noble task to idealize those natural musical qualities within the contours of great æsthetic forms, in harmony with the modern spirit of musical art, which with every year is becoming more and more cosmopolitan, the universal art of this world, an art which receives within its sympathetic folds the emotional products of any race that can find noble tones to express its ideal aspirations and longings; in short, the art that envelops the whole human race in one ideal bond of brotherhood, irrespective of religion, politics, or race.

It is curious to observe the American white man, on the whole indifferent as to the creation of original songs, imitating and appropriating the melodic forms and tonal characteristics of the songs of the colored slave. But not alone are the forms of the melodic material of the slave-songs to be found in the "negro-minstrel" ballads: we also find the quaint, fantastic, often grotesque forms of speech of those songs imitated by the white composer in order to give his ballad a certain *couleur locale*, and to make it more attractive. These ballads have become very popular, especially as sung on the stage of that peculiarly American institution, the negro minstrel performance, and have absorbed the talent of many American ballad-composers; among whom the genial *Stephen C. Foster* was undoubtedly the most naturally gifted and most successful.

The great-grandfather of Foster — Alexander Foster — came to America from Londonderry, in North Ireland, about the year 1825. The father of our ballad-composer was a man of culture, and well known for his generosity and hospitality. He performed with taste and feeling upon the violin, but never played much, and then only for the amusement of his children. He built him

self a handsome residence near Pittsburg, overlooking the Alleghany River. It was here that Stephen Collins Foster was born on July 4, 1826, while the cannon at the arsenal were firing the salute in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The mother of Stephen C. Foster — Eliza Clayland Tomlinson — was brought up on the eastern shore of Maryland, where her ancestors, the Claylands, had lived since the first settlement of the State by the English. Mrs. Foster was a woman of superior intellect and culture, and endowed with fine poetic fancy. Stephen C. Foster entered, in 1840, the Athens Academy in the northern part of Pennsylvania; in 1841 he went to Jefferson College, near Pittsburg. But he never liked the restraints of the schoolroom, and most of his accomplishments he acquired by himself. He was a great student, and taught himself French and German, and was a tolerably good painter. He pored constantly over the works of Mozart, Beethoven, and Weber. He had from childhood been a musician; and at the age of seven years he learned, unaided, to play upon the flageolet. But it was at Athens that his first musical composition was performed, — a waltz which he arranged for four flutes. In 1842 he composed his first published song, "Open thy Lattice, Love." With the exception of this song, he nearly always wrote the words and music of his ballads. In 1845–46 he composed "The Louisiana Belle," "Old Uncle Ned," and "O Susannah," for his brother and a party of young men who met twice a week at his father's house, to practise singing under his instruction, and who had become tired of the old ballads then in vogue.

The next pieces he wrote were "My Old Kentucky Home," "Old Dog Tray," "Massa's in the Cold Ground,"

"Gentle Annie," "Willie, we have missed you," "I would not die in springtime," "Come where my Love lies dreaming," "I see her still in my dreams," "Old Black Joe," "Ellen Boyne" (from which the air of "John Brown's Body" was afterwards taken), "Laura Lee," and about one hundred and fifty others. Most of his ballads became immensely popular all over the country. His last song was "Beautiful Dreamer." He died in New York, on the 13th of January, 1864. He was staying at the American Hotel, and was attacked with ague and fever. In attempting to dress himself when too weak to do so, he swooned and fell, striking the wash-water pitcher, which cut one of the small arteries in the side of his face. He lost so much blood that he died three days afterwards. He is buried in the "Alleghany Cemetery" at Pittsburg, beside his father and mother, and not far from the spot where he was born. A plain tombstone marks his grave.[1]

Foster was of a gentle, sweet temper, and full of feeling. His love and devotion to his father and mother were conspicuous traits of his character, and when they died his grief was sad to behold. He never could speak of his mother, after her death, without shedding tears. All these natural, noble, and refined qualities made Foster the sweet singer of so many pure songs. His ballads are, with regard to melodic and harmonic treatment, very *naïve* and simple; tonic, dominant, and subdominant are all the harmonic material upon which they rest. But beyond this natural simplicity, a genuinely sweet and extremely pleasing (though at times a little too sentimental) expression is to be found; and a good deal of

[1] The above information concerning Foster was communicated to me by his brother, the Hon. T. C. Foster.

originality in melodic inventiveness belongs to the Foster ballad, though in some of his later ballads, after he had reached great popularity, the composer often repeated himself. The harmonic accompaniment, for pianoforte or guitar, is extremely simple: but simplicity is here in place; a richer harmonic setting would have interfered with the natural simplicity of these songs. Foster's ballads reflect a gentle, refined spirit; they are the old psalm-tunes idealized and transplanted into their real secular sphere, with a certain Irish strain of pathos superadded. The composer of "Old Dog Tray," "Old Kentucky Home," etc., said *naïvely* and gently what he had to say, without false pretension or bombastic phrases; but his sweet sayings touch the heart and remain in the memory. Numerous were the imitators of his peculiar style, but none possessed Foster's natural æsthetic taste and geniality. He may be called the American people's composer *par excellence.*

CHAPTER XXIII.

OPERA IN NEW YORK: ITALIAN, GERMAN, AMERICAN. — FRENCH OPERA IN NEW ORLEANS.

Now let us turn to the last struggles of the Italian opera, as represented on the boards of the Academy of Music, and examine at the same time the means resorted to by those in whose hands the fate of the old house rested, to prevent that form of the lyrical drama, already greatly antiquated, from becoming wholly obsolete within the walls, where, less than half a century ago, it first appeared in such brilliant array.

Max Strakosch opened the season 1873–74 with a splendid company. Nilsson was then at the height of her reputation and her art; Campanini, with his sympathetic, fresh tenor voice, came from Italy, heralded as an ideal Lohengrin; Maurel, with his splendid baritone voice, his great vocal art, and dramatic power, came from France. Here are the names of the rest of the company: Octavia Torriani, Alice Maresi, Annie Louise Cary, Capoul, Del Puente, Nanetti, Scolaca. The most interesting performances of the season were "Mignon" and "Lohengrin."

In January, 1876, the distinguished singer, Mlle. Teresa Tietjens, paid a visit to America. She also was under the management of Max Strakosch, and appeared in concert and opera at the Academy of Music. She represented *Norma*, *Lucrezia*, *Leonora* (The Trova-

tore), *Donna Anna* (Don Giovanni), and at a farewell *soirée* she sang selections from "Oberon," "Fidelio," "La Traviata," and "Semiramide." Her range of parts, as a lyrical artist, was extended. Though poorly supported by a "scratch company," she impressed everyone by her great vocal and dramatic art. As figures represent in New York, the artist's thermometer of operatic enterprise and success, the receipts of Tietjen's performances will be, in that respect, interesting. Here they are: "Norma" (first night), $3,240; "Norma" (second night), $3,310; "Norma" (third night), $2,800; "Lucrezia Borgia" (fourth night), $3,165; "Norma" (fifth night), $2,915; "Lucrezia Borgia" (sixth night), $2,322; "Norma" (*matinée*), $3,797.50. Mlle. Tietjen's terms are $500 per night, in gold, and an equal share after the receipts reach $2,000.

German opera has, as shown in the preceding pages, been repeatedly attempted on the stage of New York, but it never proved successful for any length of time. The causes of these failures were twofold: either the company was not strong in able singers, and lacked homogeneity in order to do justice to the operas presented, or the public was indifferent to the merits of the performance. German opera had not yet succeeded in becoming fashionable. In 1878 Madame Pappenheim and Mr. Charles Adams headed a German opera-company, which, on Feb. 11, opened the Academy of Music with "The Huguenots," and produced, in the course of a season of several weeks, "Lohengrin," "La Juive," "Tannhäuser," "The Flying Dutchman," "Faust," "Rienzi,"—and then came the deluge.

On March 18, 1878, Max Strakosch reappeared in New York, with his opera-company composed of Mes-

dames Kellogg, Marie Roze, Annie Louise Cary, and Messieurs Frapoli, Tom Karl, Verdi, Conly, and other minor lyrical lights. Strakosch, who, a few months before (in September), commenced his operations in San Francisco, gradually crossed the continent, and, like daring Hannibal towards Rome, pushed his lyrical forces in the direction of the old American operatic battle-ground. However, when finally arrived in New York, instead of quartering his troops in the Academy of Music, the old stronghold of Italian opera, he made a bold move, and selected Booth's Theatre as the seat of his venture, turning the cold shoulder thus to the stockholders of the Academy of Music. He gave a season of three weeks, and represented "Aïda," "La Traviata," "Rigoletto," "Il Trovatore," "Un Ballo in Maschera," "Faust," "Mignon," and "Lucia." Meanwhile the directors of the Academy of Music began to feel restless; the prospects of Italian opera began to look somewhat gloomy; the Academy of Music had a deserted appearance; a supreme effort must be made in order to bring back life and prosperity.

The Maretzeks, the Graus, the Strakosches, ruined, and without further influence, were now put aside; and for the season of 1878–79 the destinies of Italian opera in New York were entrusted to the experienced managerial hands of Colonel Mapleson, of "Her Majesty's Theatre, London." Did Mapleson infuse any new life-giving element into the enterprise? Did he fulfil the sanguine expectations of the stockholders of the Academy of Music? This company consisted of the following singers: —

OPERA SEASON UNDER COLONEL MAPLESON, 1878–79.

Etelka Gerster. Minnie Hauk. Mme. Sinico. Carmen Pisani.
Campanini and Frapolli, Tenors.
Galassi and Del Puente, Baritones.
Foli and Thierry, Basses.

He opened the Academy of Music on Oct. 16, 1878, with the performance of "La Traviata," and gave, during the season, forty-five representations, consisting of the following operas: "Traviata," "Trovatore," "Rigoletto," "Lucia," "Sonnambula," "Puritani," "Don Giovanni," "Flauto Magico," "Nozze di Figaro," "Barbiere di Seviglia," "Roberto il Diavolo," "Talismano," "Freischütz," and "Carmen." He only produced one novelty: viz., "Carmen," on Oct. 23.

On the whole, Mapleson displayed great activity during his first American opera-season. His largest receipt, when Gerster sang, was $4,800; "Carmen," with Minnie Hauk, also drew large houses; while on the nights when "Il Barbiere," "Nozze di Figaro," "Don Giovanni," were sung, the receipts did not reach $1,000.

However, in spite of this apparent financial and artistic success, Mapleson began now to raise complaints against the stockholders of the Academy of Music. All preceding managers, when losing money, endeavored to have the privilege of the stockholder, for the reservation of two hundred seats, abolished; but the stockholders held on to their seats.

Mapleson, however, made a new contract with the stockholders of the Academy of Music, for the seasons 1879–80–81–82. The document is too long to insert here. Suffice it to say that the continuance of Italian opera at the Academy of Music apparently seemed secured. Mapleson, desirous to conquer a new field of

operations in the new country, brought over "star" after "star." But all his endeavors to prevent the naturally declining institution from sudden collapse proved of no avail. The Italian opera became finally nothing but the superficial, brilliant battle-ground of the "star."

As to the artistic side of the opera-performances, everything always depends on the combination of the lyrical companies which the manager may be able to gather together; and, in spite of the skill and experience of that excellent operatic conductor L. Arditi, operas were often put on the stage in an incomplete, unsatisfactory manner. The great drawback with which an opera-manager has to deal is the fact, that those New Yorkers who patronize opera expect the manager to present some great "star," if possible several "stars." The "star" system, in the theatrical as well as in the operatic world, is destroying all great harmonious æsthetic tendency in public performances. The enormous salaries which the manager has to pay, in order to secure his "stars," taxes his exchequer to such a degree, that comparatively little is left to fill the other minor but necessary parts with competent representatives. The bringing-out of great musico-dramatic works, on an adequate artistic scale, becomes, under such circumstances, an impossibility. Truthful scenic display, in all its manifold details; perfectly harmonious *ensemble*, from the prima donna down to the chorus-singer; the necessary skilful orchestral accompaniment, — have to be treated with superficial attention. All these things must be done in as inexpensive a manner as possible, in order to save money to satisfy the exacting claims of the "star." Old, stale operas, which have already cloyed the palate of past generations, are given again and again.

If a new opera is finally put on the stage, it is done in a hurried and incomplete manner; and, of course, everything about its performance makes on a connoisseur the painful impression of uncertainty, artistic shortcoming, and bewildering haste. The "star" has her (the "star" is seldom a *he*) fixed *répertoire*, and her fixed idea about the merits of operatic compositions. "*Hors de moi, point de salut*," seems to be her motto; and she is not easily persuaded to risk her acquired reputation on new works, even of sterling merit. But however great an operatic "star's" vocal art may be, however right she may be in trying to preserve her vocal powers (this is a singer's great duty), — yet when she endeavors to impose her tyrannical laws on artistic progress, or on artistic completeness, then she becomes an unwelcome hindrance to the life of lyrico-dramatic art, and ought to be resisted by all amateurs who take a deep interest in the promotion of great modern art-aspirations and art-works. It is generally the public's fault when a "star" becomes domineering: the "star" is the audience's creation, and knows the weaknesses of her progenitors, and naturally endeavors to thrive on, and profit by, them.

Strakosch, who had endeavored to keep up a smart fight with the Academy of Music, finally succumbed, to leave the field to Colonel Mapleson. But now an opponent better provided with arms of a more modern and more effective pattern rose, and the brave colonel, seeing further struggle fruitless, gracefully retreated to the hospitable shores of old England. Italian opera, as a factor in New York's musical life, ceased to exist after having ground another manager to dust. The old Academy of Music, originally built for the pro-

duction of opera, was, after the failure of Mapleson, changed in 1886 into a play-house. While Colonel Mapleson was thus trying to galvanize the Italian opera, at the Academy of Music, into renewed action, a new and more spacious house, the Metropolitan Opera-House was being erected on Broadway and Fortieth Street, destined to become the rival of the Academy of Music in the field of Italian opera enterprise. On Oct. 22, 1883, the Metropolitan Opera-House was opened by a rather strong Italian company. I will say here that the term "Italian Opera-Company" does not any longer mean that such a company is composed — as was almost invariably the case thirty and forty years ago — of singers both born and educated in Italy, but simply that all persons, Italians, Frenchmen, Germans, English, Russians, Poles, Spaniards, Hungarians, Swedes, Americans, Christians, Turks, Jews, and Gentiles, engaged in Italian opera, sing, in a more or less correct manner, in the Italian language; the operas they perform and thus sing in Italian may have been written by composers belonging to any of the above nationalities. The whole thing is simply a perverted fashion. "Lohengrin" sung in Italian is not more an Italian opera than when sung in German, and an audience that does not understand either of these two languages will surely receive the same grade of enjoyment from a performance done in either one of them. If the listeners do not know the story of the opera by heart, they will be bound to follow it up in the pages of the "opera-book," while the performance is going on on the stage, and will thus receive as little impression of the artistic merits of the music as of the logical continuity and representation of the acting. Good voices (or no voices) are now

found all the civilized world over, and a true method of dramatic singing is no more solely the mystery of the Italian *professore.* But to return to the Metropolitan Opera-House: the company that opened the house was under management of Henry Abbey, and was composed of Mesdames Nilsson, Scalchi, Lablache, Sembrich, Valeria, Fursch-Madi, and Trebelli, and Messieurs Campanini, Novara, Del Puente, Stagno, Kaschmann, and Capoul. The season consisted of sixty-one representations, and the operas performed were "Faust," "Il Trovatore," "Lucia," "La Gioconda," "La Favorita," "Il Barbiere," "Lohengrin," "Martha," "Carmen," "Hamlet," "Mefistofele," "Roberto il Diavolo," "Don Giovanni," "Il Profeto." Abbey's musical directors were C. Campanini, the brother of the singer, and Signor Vianesi. This season of Italian opera, so far the last important one that has taken place in New York, also proved, in a financial way, very disastrous to Mr. Abbey, and caused him to relinquish at once the management of such a dangerous machine. Italian opera in New York, as in Paris, Vienna, and other European cities, was now fast losing its hold on the people. The directors of the Metropolitan Opera-House were as little as those who about thirty-five years ago built the Academy of Music, guilty of entertaining any distinct notions regarding the artistic form and style of the lyrical drama, and its æsthetic importance within the range of musical art-works, constructed according to the requirements of the modern art-spirit. They projected the building of an up-town opera-house of which they were to be the controlling financial powers. They started, *faute de mieux*, with the traditional Italian opera. Their movement in the interest of operatic en-

tertainments was not tainted with any revolutionary art-intentions. "Italian opera will be given if it pays to do so; if not, something else will have to be tried." Thus, when Henry Abbey, the first *impressario* of the Metropolitan Opera-House, lost, by his Italian opera-venture, a large sum of money, and afterwards did not feel inclined to assume the financial responsibility for another season, the directors, with Italian opera on their brains, accordingly endeavored to make, with Mr. Gye of London, arrangements for the production of the stale article. The negotiations, however, proved a failure; and then it came to pass that Dr. Leopold Damrosch, seeing a good chance for the successful production in New York of German opera, on the artistic basis gained through the experience of the representations of the Wagner musical drama, came forth with his scheme. The directors of the Metropolitan Opera-House — and if only as an experiment in the new direction — authorized Dr. Damrosch to engage a German company to carry out his plan; and they, at the same time, entrusted him with the management for this first season of the German opera at the Metropolitan Opera-House. Damrosch at once began to make his preliminary arrangements, and late in summer, at the end of August, he started for Germany in the interest of the new enterprise. Within the short time of a month he had succeeded in securing a good company of German singers. On Nov. 17, 1884, the second season of opera at the Metropolitan Opera-House was opened with a highly successful representation of Wagner's "Tannhäuser." Mr. Damrosch's German opera-company consisted of Mesdames Materna, Krauss, Schroeder, Hanfstengel, Brandt, and Slach, Messieurs Schott, Robinson, Stau-

digl, Koegel, and Udvardi. The operas which formed Damrosch's *répertoire* were, Wagner's "Tannhäuser," "Lohengrin," "Die Walküre," Beethoven's "Fidelio," Meyerbeer's "Die Hugenotten," "Der Prophet," Weber's "Der Freischütz," Rossini's "Wilhelm Tell," Mozart's "Don Juan," Auber's "Die Stumme von Portici," Verdi's "Rigoletto," Halévy's "Die Jüdin." With each successive representation German opera (or opera sung in German), as performed by the singers under Dr. Damrosch's direction, gained in New York a stronger foothold; and the enterprise went far to prove that opera-performances, whether sung in German, Italian, French, or English, but in form and style based on the French grand opera as established over a century ago by Gluck in Paris, and carried to its more perfect æsthetic, dramatic consequences by Richard Wagner,[1] are not alone accepted, but demanded by American audiences. Dr. Damrosch, having received his operatic education under the influence of the teachings of the Wagner school, was alive to the great importance regarding the æsthetic and artistic homogeneity upon which the modern lyrical drama is imperiously based. He thus paid close attention to all the different manifold details that enter into the production of modern opera. The singers impersonating the heroes and heroines of the respective musical dramas, with the world of secondary artistic forces, the chorus, the orchestra, the scenic representations, formed, under Damrosch's energetic, intelligent leadership, a fine dramatic *ensemble*. Everything, from the most prominent to the most subordinate point, appeared in its right place in order to produce, according to the poetic intentions

[1] See Ritter's Student's History of Music.

of the art-work, the right æsthetic atmosphere. The audiences that were attracted to the Metropolitan Opera-House by the German opera-performances at once began to appreciate Dr. Damrosch's and his company's intelligent artistic energy and enthusiasm, and enjoyed greatly and applauded warmly each new effort. The enterprise became a great success, and the irrepressible, aggressive, sanguine Wagnerite, seeing the goal of his musico-dramatic ideal taking a more promising, lasting shape, began now to propose to consign to everlasting oblivion all musical forms that are not in strict accordance with Wagner's æsthetic receipts. With the establishment of German opera on the boards of the Metropolitan operatic stage a new musical spirit began to animate the New-York melomane, and to cause the American metropolis to take an important place among the musico-artistic cities of the world. Italian opera, in 1825, started the progress, and finally and naturally led into the cosmopolitan musical drama of our time, in whatever language people may choose to sing it, or have it sung. Dr. Damrosch's share towards this transformation is great, but inexorable death cut him off before he could realize the largest results of his noble labors.

Dr. Leopold Damrosch was born in Posen, Oct. 22, 1832. At an early age he showed talent for music, but, at the desire of his parents, studied medicine, and in 1854 received his medical degree at the University of Berlin. Having, during the time of his medical studies, kept up his musical practice, he now, with the consent of his parents, became a musician. He studied in Berlin, — violin with Hubert Ries, and composition with Dehn and Böhmer. In 1856 he became a member of

the court orchestra at Weimar. Here, under Liszt's enthusiastic guidance, he became a warm disciple of the new German school of music. In 1858 he became conductor of the Philharmonic Society at Breslau, whence he made several concert tours to other German cities. In 1862 he organized the Breslau Orchestral Society and a chorus society. In 1871 he came to New York, having, at the recommendation of Mr. Edward Schuberth, been engaged conductor of the male-chorus society, "The Arion," which, under his leadership, was reconstructed, and became quite efficient again. In 1873, after the New-York Harmonic Society had been dissolved, and oratorio performances having been for a time discontinued, Damrosch founded the "Oratorio Society." For the season 1876–77 he was chosen conductor of the Philharmonic Society. In 1878 he organized "The Symphony Society," to perform, under his direction, the symphonic works of the classic and modern composers. Damrosch produced, in the course of time, such works as Bach's "Matthew Passion Music," Brahm's "Ein Deutches Requiem," Handel's "Messiah," "Israel in Egypt," "Judas Maccabæus," Mendelssohn's two oratorios, Berlioz's "La Damnation de Faust," and "Grande Messe des Morts," besides a number of other compositions. In 1881 he organized in New York a grand musical festival at the Seventh Regiment Armory. Although the venture was partly successful, yet it again proved that in a city like New York, provided every season with an abundance of concerts of all styles and characters, musical festivals are out of place. The idea of giving musical festivals lasting a number of days, is rather a matter indulged in by provincial towns, where the performance of important

compositions or fine concerts are of rare occurrence. Damrosch did not repeat the musical festival venture.

In 1883 he resigned his position as conductor to the Arion, and was succeeded by Mr. F. von der Stücken. The climax of his artistic labors was reached when, as narrated above, he became director of the first German opera-company at the Metropolitan Opera-House. The season was drawing to its close, when, fatigued from over-exertion, he, after a performance of "Lohengrin," contracted a bad cold, from which, after a few days' suffering, he died, Feb. 15, 1885.

Damrosch was a gifted, thorough musician, a violinist of considerable technical attainment, a broad-minded, educated man, with fine literary accomplishments, and of a refined nature. He was a fertile composer, although few of his most important works have been brought out. Among his published compositions we find a "Festival Overture" (played at his first appearance in New York as conductor of the "Arion"); "Ruth and Naomi," cantata; "Sulamith," a concerto; and other pieces for violin, part-songs for male chorus, a collection of church music, and a number of duets and *Lieder*. Among his manuscripts are a symphony, several marches for orchestra, an unfinished opera, a concerto for violin, and several works for chorus and orchestra.

Walter J. Damrosch, his oldest son, succeeded him in the leadership of the "Symphony Society" and the "Oratorio Society." He is also assistant conductor of the German opera at the Metropolitan Opera-House.

The first season of German opera under Dr. Damrosch's management, was, in a financial way, a tolerably satisfactory one to the stockholders. There was a deficit of only about $40,000. This unexpected happy

result caused the directors to vote for the continuance of German opera for another season. The business management of the enterprise was now placed in the hands of Mr. Edmund C. Stanton. Among the new members of the company Fräulein Lilli Lehmann, Herr Eloi Silva, and Herr Emil Fischer were the most prominent ones, and the engagement of Mr. Anton Seidl as musical director proved to be a most happy choice. The season was opened Nov. 23, 1885, with "Lohengrin," and comprised fifty-two representations. Nine different operas were given, of which Goldmark's "Die Königin von Saba" (first performance Dec. 2), Wagner's "Die Meistersinger" (first performance Jan. 4), were the novelties. "Rienzi" also was given for the first time on Feb. 5 by this company. The brilliant artistic success achieved under the new management caused such general satisfaction, that the stockholders empowered Director Stanton to make contracts with the artists for three years. It began to look as if the directors of the Metropolitan Opera-House were endeavoring to give the new operatic enterprise an air of permanency.

The season of 1886–87 was opened with Wagner's "Walküre," in which Albert Niemann, the distinguished dramatic tenor, made his first appearance on the American stage. The season comprised sixty-one performances, and closed Feb. 26. Fourteen different operas were given, three of which were novelties; viz., Brühl's "Das Goldene Kreuz" (first performance Nov. 19), Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde" (first performance Dec. 1), Goldmark's "Merlin" (first performance Jan. 3).

The season 1887–88 was begun Nov. 2, 1887, with Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde," and closed Feb. 18. The company gave sixty-four representations, and pro-

duced fourteen different operas. The novelties given were most important additions to the *répertoire* of the Metropolitan Opera-House. They were Wagner's "Siegfried" (first performance Nov. 9), Nessler's "Der Trompeter von Säckingen" (first performance Nov. 23), Weber's "Euryanthe" (first performance Dec. 23; this must be regarded as the real first complete performance of the work in New York), Spontini's "Ferdinand Cortez" (first performance Jan. 6), and Wagner's "Götterdämmerung" (first performance Jan. 20). This season was again marked by great energy and activity on the part of the management of the Metropolitan Opera-House. The new works by Wagner, as well as "Ferdinand Cortez" and "Euryanthe," which form such important links between Gluck's and Wagner's art-endeavors, were put on the stage, with all the means of scenic splendor and artistic rendering at the disposal of the directors. The expenses, however, greatly surpassed the receipts at the box-office. This naturally caused dissatisfaction among the stockholders. The persistent advocates of Italian opera found this state of things a welcome opportunity to renew their attacks on the Wagner opera. This disaffection, rather artificially spread among the stockholders, seemed to have placed the existence of German opera, as represented at the Metropolitan Opera-House, for a time in jeopardy. Some of those who, the previous season, felt so elated and enthusiastic about the artistic and financial success of "our German opera," were now loudest in denouncing the expensive enterprise. "People are sick of Wagner." "Those large-limbed, heavy-voiced Germans do not know how to sing." "We are tired of paying enormous salaries to vocal wrecks like Niemann and others,

who were well enough twenty-five years ago." "What does the public care about Wagner's theories, and his endless, tiresome declamations, drowned in endless, overwhelming orchestral noises? We want Italian opera, melodies which people can understand and enjoy, sung by singers with finely trained voices." "We have not built the Opera-House merely for the pleasure of covering every season a large deficit, so that people may have the pleasure of hearing Wagner; we at least expect the enterprise to pay expenses." Such were the remarks and reasonings that went flying about in New-York amateur musical circles. Under the circumstances, the situation of the friends of German opera was not a reassuring one.

On Jan. 21, 1888, the following address was sent to the stockholders of the Metropolitan Opera-House, in order to test the strength of those among them who are dissatisfied with the present management: —

"At a meeting of the Directors of the Metropolitan Opera-House Company of New York, Limited, held Friday evening, January 20th, 1888, it was resolved that the following circular be sent to each of the stockholders, with the request of an answer by Wednesday, January 25th.

"The Directors made very careful estimates for the opera season of 1887–88, and found that the opera would probably be given for the assessments, provided the receipts from the public amounted to $3,000 per performance. The subscription was 50 per cent. larger than last year (about $80,000 against $52,000), and they anticipated larger receipts than for 1886–87, when the average was about $3,300. The standard of high excellence has been maintained, but the public interest in German opera seems to have so greatly fallen off that the receipts so far average only about $2,500. This, if continued, will show a deficiency of about $30,000 by the close of the season. Against this the Directors have increase in rentals of about $14,000. Should no opera be given next season, the Directors may hope to

receive for rents about $60,000. Against this the expenses of interest, taxes, rent of ball-rooms, repairs, maintenance, etc., and the engagements already made with some artists, will be about $125,000, which would require an assessment of about $1,000 per box.

"Will you kindly answer which of the following propositions you favor: —

"1. To go on with German opera, with an assessment of $3,200 per box.

"2. To give no opera next year, with an assessment of $1,000 per box, and to resume, if possible, the following season.

"The Directors have not suggested giving Italian opera, because they are convinced that to do so in a satisfactory manner will require a much larger assessment upon the stockholders than to give German opera."

At a meeting held on Jan. 27, the stockholders, called upon to decide regarding the continuance of German opera, voted to about four to one in the affirmative.

But this vote in favor of the continuance of German opera must not be regarded as an artistic preference on the part of the majority of the stockholders for this form of lyrical drama. *Le bout de l'oreille*, piercing through the lines of the above circular; viz., that the stockholders will probably have to be more largely assessed for the giving of Italian opera, exercised, no doubt, some decisive influence on the particular musical taste of many of the stockholders. If the directors of the Metropolitan Opera-House Company had been in the position to assure the stockholders that Italian opera would be given "in a satisfactory manner," on the same financial basis as German opera is given, the musical taste of the majority of those gentlemen would, most probably, have suddenly made a revolution in favor of "il bel canto." But the experience of Henry Abbey, the first manager of Italian opera at this opera-house, was not an encouraging example to follow. The season of 1888–89 must

be counted, in every sense, as one of the most successful ones of the German opera. It opened Nov. 28, 1888, and closed March 23, 1889. The following sixteen works were produced: —

Opera.	Composer.	Date of First Performance.	Times Given.
Huguenots	Meyerbeer	November 28	5
Lohengrin	Wagner	November 30	2
William Tell	Rossini	December 3	3
Fidelio	Beethoven	December 5	2
L'Africaine	Meyerbeer	December 7	5
Faust	Gounod	December 14	4
Siegfried	Wagner	December 21	6
Rheingold	Wagner	January 4	9
Prophet	Meyerbeer	January 9	3
Meistersinger	Wagner	January 11	5
La Juive	Halevy	January 21	3
Tannhäuser	Wagner	January 30	5
Trovatore	Verdi	February 6	5
Walküre	Wagner	February 15	4
Aïda	Verdi	February 20	3
Götterdämmerung	Wagner	March 11	4

The only novelty was the performance of Wagner's "Das Rheingold." Meyerbeer's "L'Africaine" was added to the *répertoire* of the German company. But the great artistic event of the season was the first performance in America of a complete cycle of Wagner's famous "Der Ring des Nibelungen." The following figures, representing the financial statement of the Metropolitan Opera-House Company, Limited, for the past season, speak for themselves; and, judging from report, are cheerfully accepted by the stockholders, as encouraging signs of the New-York musical public's approval of the management's policy regarding the upholding of German opera-performances.

STATEMENT SHOWING RESULTS, 1888–89.

Amount paid for Opera	$333,731.31	
Taxes, Interest, etc.	69,642.06	
Salaries, Wages, Fuel, Law, etc.	46,955.02	
Repairs to House	6,316.60	
Repairs, Scenery, and Costumes	5,158.29	
New Scenery, Costumes	14,407.71	
New Music	1,976.13	
		$478,187.12
Receipts, Opera	$213,630.99	
Receipts from Stockholders	201,180.00	
Due from Stockholders for 1888–89	5,820.00	
Rental	57,028.00	
Deficit for year	528.13	
		$478,187.12

Wagner's Art. — It will perhaps be interesting to the student of modern musico-dramatic art, as influenced and called forth by Wagner's endeavors, to get a retrospective glance at the rise and progress of this art-tendency in the United States. The present writer, having been an active participant in, and a sympathetic observer and student of, this great modern musical movement, is convinced of the fact that the historical information and dates given here will prove that this art-movement was not inaugurated by *one* man, as interested persons would like to have us believe, but by a small phalanx of enthusiastic young musicians, Europeans and Americans, who, intelligently, and with firm conviction, accepted the new art-tendency, as first proclaimed by Schumann and Berlioz, and afterwards — though somewhat transformed in form and spirit — more emphatically put forth by Wagner and his great apostle Franz Liszt. In the eyes of those first advocates of the new musical movement, classicism was a

naturally accepted matter. To teach Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, was considered a most cheerful duty; to praise those masters' works an insult to their memory; they stand above praise. But to make propaganda for the revival of an unknown, J. S. Bach, that first colossal representative of the "music of the future," to prepare the field for the artistic emanations of a Schubert, a Chopin, a Schumann, a Berlioz, and finally to educate adherents for Wagner's art, required then warm artistic conviction, disinterested, continued action, and iron perseverance. Before the public, in the private lesson-room, in the "press," those enthusiastic disciples upheld, taught, defended, their new art-principles. The movement began gradually to spread, new effective forces entered into its service, new disciples were won over, and thus step by step the first firm foundations were laid here for modern art-culture to rest firmly upon. Though the movement has now gained some encouraging aspects, yet it is still in its progressively growing process. But the final satisfactory results of that growth can be looked for with assurance.

Wagner and his works were, after the composer's revolutionary escapade in the streets of Dresden, May, 1849, "boycotted" by all the big and little German princes, who, when order was restored throughout the Fatherland, returned to their capitals to become more tyrannical than ever before. "Rienzi," "Der Fliegende Holländer," "Tannhäuser," were laid aside, and not till after the performance of "Lohengrin" under Liszt's direction, at Weimar, 1850, did the Wagner cultus begin gradually to set in, in spite of the most energetic opposition on the part of the conservatives in politics and

music. Especially great were the trepidations of the self-appointed guardians of musical classicism, — which then really meant Mendelssohnism, — at the inroads Wagner's art was making throughout Germany.

Here, in America, and especially by most of the leading musicians in New York and Boston, the "music of the future," was opposed with the same insane vigor and illogical reasoning as in Europe. The fight was carried on here in a most ridiculous manner. People who had never heard a note of Wagner's music, had never witnessed the performance of a Wagner music-drama, had never taken the trouble — provided they had the necessary practical knowledge to do so — to study the score of any of Wagner's published works, were loud in their denunciations of this "corrupter of classical taste," and had the barefaced impudence to rush into print to condemn the "music of the future." All they knew about Wagner's art were the more or less savage injurious criticisms sent forth by the bitter opponents of the author of "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin," — and yet each time a Wagner fragment was given here, their countenances sank, they rested dumfounded in the presence of so much beauty of a novel original character; but, trusting not their own ears, they generally concluded to wait for the verdict of the "press," which was expected to reflect the impressions of such performances, and which had as a rule then nothing better to do than to publish insane fun regarding the theories of the exiled musician; from that quarter the doubters had then very little elucidation to gain regarding the "to be or not to be" of Wagner musico-dramatic art. As far as I can gather, the first performance in America of a Wagner fragment — an arrangement of

part of a *finale* from "Tannhäuser" — was given about 1852, by the Germania Orchestra under the leadership of Carl Bergmann. On Oct. 22, 1853, they played the first time at Boston the "Tannhäuser" Overture, which — to use a favorite modern expression — caused a sensation. On Dec. 3, the same year, Carl Bergmann with the Germanians gave in Boston "A Wagner Night," the first time that such a thing was done in America: the pieces were "Tannhäuser," Overture; Bridal Chorus, from "Lohengrin"; Reception at the Emperor's, from "Lohengrin"; "Rienzi," Overture; Finale, from "Tannhäuser"; Grand Finale, from "Rienzi": the vocal ensembles were arrangements for the orchestra. The plucky Germanians had thus, by a sudden energetic move, set the ball rolling in favor of Wagner's music. Boston was then, in a certain degree, more of a musical centre than New York; the news of the Germanians' success there with Wagner's music spread quickly, and the then conservative New York had to follow. On April 21, 1855, the Philharmonic Society played for the first time in New York, Wagner's "Tannhäuser" Overture; but it was again under Bergmann's leadership that it was thus produced. Here is the manner in which a New-York paper announced the contemplated performance of the work: "At the next concert will be given the overture to Wagner's "Tannhäuser," that bone of contention over which the musical critics of Europe are still wrangling. It is to be performed here for the first time, and much curiosity will be felt to know how just are the praises and the censures that have so freely been lavished on it." Suffice it to say that the curiosity was satisfied, the overture pleased immensely, and the conservative classicists began to

grumble. A glance at the programmes of the Philharmonic Society, as published in another part of this work, will, however, show that fragments from Wagner's works were, until lately, selected "few and far between" for performance at its concerts.

German men-chorus societies, especially the New York "Arion" and "Liederkranz," began to take up the study of some of Wagner's pieces adapted for their use, such as "The Pilgrim Chorus" and "March" from Tannhäuser, and other fragments. Solo-singers began to sing with success "O Du mein holder Abendstern." The field of Wagner's art extended with every year; east and west intelligent, striving musicians took up the cause of the much abused composer (see programmes of the Cincinnati "Cecilia Society," Chap. XXI.). The next important step to be taken now was the representation of some opera by Wagner. When, in October, 1856, Bergmann was conductor of a German opera-company, giving under the management of Herr von Berkel, first at Niblo's, and afterwards at the Broadway Theatre, "Robert der Teufel," "Stradella," "Undine," "Czaar und Zimmermann," "Maurer und Schlosser," "Fidelio," "Der Freischütz," the idea was entertained to perform also "Tannhäuser." The meagre success of the venture did then not encourage the undertaking of such a difficult and expensive task. Bergmann had, however, set his heart upon it, and finally, April 4, 1859, "Tannhäuser" was given (see Chap. XV.). It must also be mentioned here that about the same epoch he brought out with the "Arion," Wagner's cantata, "Das Liebesmahl der Apostel." Bergmann was one of the most enthusiastic, faithful, and active disciples of the modern school. He was, however, not a heedless Wagner fanatic, but a sin-

cere, intelligent admirer of this master's works. When, as conductor of the Philharmonic Society, he repeatedly advocated the performance of Wagner's music, and when told by the old conservatives of the Society that people did not like it, he firmly replied, "They must hear it till they do like it." I will give here a proof of Bergmann's catholicity of musical taste. In 1856, '57, '58, '59, and '60 he gave, during the winter, Sunday concerts at the City Assembly Rooms on Broadway. His orchestra was an excellent one, and some of the best New York solo artists appeared there. Here is the scheme for the winter, 1856–57. Symphonies: Beethoven's 6th and 7th; Mozart's D-major; Haydn's G-major; Mendelssohn's A-minor; Schuberth's C-major; Schumann's B-flat major and D-minor; Gade's C-minor; Liszt's "Symphonic Poëms Tasso"; "Fest Klänge"; "Preludien." Overtures: Beethoven's "Leonora" and "Coriolan"; Mendelssohn's "Meeresstille" and "Die Hebriden"; Schumann's "Manfred"; Wagner's "Faust," "Rienzi," and "Tannhäuser"; Berlioz's "King Lear" and "Les Francs Juges," and parts from "Romeo and Juliet." Concertos for the pianoforte: Beethoven's in E-flat and G, and his Tripel Concerto for Piano, Violin, and 'Cello; Schumann's A-minor; Chopin's F-minor; Liszt's E-flat, and others; fragments from Schumann's "Das Paradies und die Peri," "Der Rose Pilgerfahrt"; from Gluck's "Alceste" and "Orpheus"; Beethoven's "Fidelio"; and Wagner's "Der Fliegende Holländer," "Rienzi," "Tannhäuser," and "Lohengrin." Has this scheme been surpassed by Bergmann's successors in New York? It is the historian's business to put forth the claims of the real originator of modern music in New York; and Bergmann labored nobly in that direc-

tion. He, however, is already forgotten by those who have gained most by his plucky labors, done, at a time when comparatively few of the New York musical public were able to appreciate their importance. Bergmann and his orchestra, as a rule, lost money by those concerts, — even, in this respect, his successors have not yet surpassed him; they, or somebody else, generally find deficits to cover.

Wagner's art, however, gained ground with every year. A second attempt to introduce some of Wagner's operas to the New-York public was made in 1870. We have seen, in a previous chapter, that Carl Bergmann first produced "Tannhäuser" in America. Mr. A. Neuendorf, a pupil of Anschütz, brought out "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin" at the old German Stadt Theatre in the Bowery; and, considering the extraordinary means of all kinds required to put a Wagner opera somewhat effectively on the stage, the Neuendorf venture must be pronounced a very creditable one. The artistic forces employed were of modest character; but, in spite of all sorts of shortcomings, there were life, enthusiasm, an agreeable freshness, and commendable effort on the part of the performers about these Wagner representations. The chorus was good, and sang and acted with surprising *aplomb* and intelligence; the orchestra, though rather small, was of excellent quality, and played with vim.

So far the Wagner movement in New York was chiefly confined to the German population that frequented the old Stadt Theatre in the Bowery. The bulk of American musical amateurs remained strangers to it, reading simply, as curiosity led them, newspaper comments more or less favorable to Wagner's

art; Italian opera, as concentrated in this or that favorite "star," still monopolized their attention and their purse. Finally, in 1873 "Lohengrin" was performed in Italian at the Academy of Music by Strakosch's company. The work of course pleased immensely, and gave the *habitués* of the Italian opera a taste of Wagner's genius. In 1878 the Pappenheim Company brought out "Rienzi" and the "Flying Dutchman" (which G. Carlberg had previously performed in Philadelphia for the first time in America). In 1877 we had — though on account of the poor performance — a somewhat bitter foretaste of "Die Walküre," under the leadership of Neuendorf. The only good character in that representation was Mme. Pappenheim.

Meanwhile Mr. Thomas began to incorporate into the programme of his different orchestral concert enterprises fragments of Wagner's works as they successively began to appear in Europe. He thus effectively contributed towards the popularization of Wagner's music. In April, 1884, he arranged a number of remarkable Wagner concerts with the eminent Wagner singers Materna, Winkelmann, and Scaria. Mr. H. T. Finck,[1] who had prepared the "Wagner Book" for these concerts, makes the following remarks regarding Thomas's enterprise: —

"Perhaps it is not generally known that Mr. Thomas some years ago entertained the project of reviving German opera in New York, in a manner that should eclipse all previous operatic enterprises in this country. . . . Mr. Thomas was already elaborating his plans, when an accident frustrated them and took the whole matter out of his hands. This accident was the signal failure of Italian opera at the Metropolitan Opera-House during the first season of its existence."

[1] Chopin and Other Musical Essays.

Mr. Finck then mentions the great success German opera "immediately scored" under the direction of Dr. Damrosch and his eminent successor, Anton Seidl, and goes on to say: —

"Perhaps it is fortunate that Mr. Thomas' project was never realized. Had he succeeded, New York and several other cities would no doubt have enjoyed a series of interesting Wagner performances for one or two seasons: but after the first curiosity had been satisfied, it is very likely that the enterprise would have come to an end for lack of funds."

Mr. Finck must, no doubt, have had the dismal failure of the "Grand National Opera, sung by Americans under the Musical Direction of Theodore Thomas," in his mind when he penned the above lines. The curiosity of New-York musical amateurs to hear Wagner's operas at the Metropolitan Opera-House seems not to have been satisfied yet.

The problem of fine performances in America of Wagner's Music Dramas was finally solved by the appearance of Dr. Damrosch's German company on the boards of the Metropolitan Opera-House. With the advent of Anton Seidl the long-prepared movement reached its climax. Under his direction first appeared in America "Die Meistersinger," "Tristan und Isolde," and the whole of "Der Ring des Nibelungen"; besides a number of other important operas by other masters. We are repeatedly told by the opponents of Wagner's music, that the managers of the Metropolitan Opera-House give this composer's works too frequently, and that the public is getting tired of them. This accusation is not borne out by experience, for, as the exact official reports tell regarding the financial results, Wag-

ner's operas have thus far brought in the largest receipts. In order to strengthen this assertion, I will give here the figures corresponding to the receipts of the Wagnerian and non-Wagnerian operas; they will tell the true story of the public's preference: —

Opera.	Total Receipts.	Average Receipts.	Total Attendance.	Average Attendance.
Tannhäuser	$17,347.25	$3,469.45	13,732	2,746
Rheingold	30,208.25	3,356.52	25,200	2,800
Jewess	10,025.50	3,341.83	8,194	2,731
Götterdämmerung	14,208.50	3,302.12	10,800	2,700
Trovatore	16,503.75	3,275.00	13,400	2,680
Lohengrin	6,195.50	3,097.75	5,582	2,791
Aida	9,204.00	3,068.00	7,966	2,655
Siegfried	18,054.25	3,009.04	14,377	2,396
L'Africaine	14,995.00	2,999.00	13,678	2,735
Meistersinger	14,784.50	2,956.90	12,072	2,414
Huguenots	14,546.50	2,909.30	12,657	2,531
Walküre	14,188.25	2,837.65	10,109	2,021
Faust	10,289.75	2,572.43	9,386	2,346
Prophet	7,341.75	2,447.25	6,845	2,281
Fidelio	4,454.75	2,227.37	4,204	2,102
William Tell	6,436.00	2,145.33	6,708	2,236
Total	$208,783.00	$3,070.30	174,909	2,572

I have often seen the statement made by some writers in New York papers, that Musical Director Anton Seidl is responsible for the selection of the *répertoire* of the Metropolitan Opera-House. This is a wrong impression, and does Mr. Seidl great injustice. Although he is expected to propose works to be performed, and although his preferences are duly considered, yet the determining power for the final selection of the operas to be represented rests in the hands of a committee appointed by the directors, which is alone responsible for the whole *répertoire*.

Opera in New Orleans. — Immediately after the war, three brothers named Alhaiza opened the new French opera-house with a strolling company, and did so well that they found means to send two of the brothers to Paris to secure a full operatic and dramatic company for the season of 1866–67. Disasters of the gravest kind beset the undertaking. Charles and Marcelin Alhaiza went to Paris, and engaged an excellent company. On the eve of the departure of the company, Marcelin died. Charles brought the company to New York, and transferred the members of it to the steamer "Evening Star," bound for New Orleans. On the 3d of October, 1866, the steamer was overtaken by a severe storm, disabled, and sunk at a point about a hundred and eighty miles south-east of Tybee Island. Thirty men and one woman alone reached land, but over three hundred souls perished; and among the number were the members of the French opera-troupe and its manager Charles Alhaiza. The surviving brother, Paul, opened the opera-house, Nov. 9, presenting Italian opera, having engaged the company known as the Strakosch-Ghioni and Susini troupe. The star of the company was Mme. Patti-Strakosch, sister of Mlle. Adelina Patti, whose genius on the same stage subsequently received the stamp of approval that made it recognized throughout the capitals of the Old World.

In 1868 an attempt was made to revive the fortune of the opera, Paul Alhaiza and E. Calabresi being the chief promoters of the scheme; but the plan failed, and a new opera-house association was formed, composed of merchants, professional men, bankers, and others, who purchased the building, and made arrangements for a new opera-season. Mr. E. Calabresi was appointed

manager, at a very high salary. In due time he returned from Europe with a full company, among which were such great artists as Michot, Castelmary, and Duonestre; but otherwise the troupe was rather a weak one.

After a hard struggle of two seasons, the Opera-house Association found itself in debt; and, having spent its whole capital, it was obliged to go into liquidation. In the summer of 1872 Mr. Placide Canonge, a Creole gentleman, and writer for the press, engaged a dramatic company in France, and gave a season of drama and comedy. The following season Mr. Canonge went abroad, and engaged the largest operatic and dramatic company that had ever appeared on the French-speaking stage of New Orleans. In an artistic sense the season was a triumph, as was the following one under the same management. The panic of 1873, the political disturbances and other misfortunes that beset the residents of the Crescent City, made it plain that the opera could only be conducted at an immense pecuniary sacrifice; and so Mr. Canonge, after three seasons of hard work in the cause of art, retired, in the spring of 1875, from the field of his self-denying labors, with the kind wishes of all lovers of the opera, as well as those who only appreciate dramatic art and comedy. After the retirement of Mr. Canonge, no systematic effort was made to revive and conduct the opera till the season of 1880. It is true that incomplete companies from time to time appeared, with varying fortune; but it was not till Mr. Beauplan brought his excellent French opera-troupe to the opera-house, in the autumn of 1880, that a regular season of grand opera was given. The chief singers were Mlles. Ambré, La Blache, Del Prato; and Messrs. Toumie, tenor; Pellini, light tenor; Jourdan, basso.

It is said that the season would have been profitable, had the dramatic company been eliminated from the expense account. Mr. Beauplan retired from the management at the end of the season.

The record of the Don Quixotish career of the American National Opera-Company, already alluded to in another place, will form, if not a fitting, at any rate an instructive close to this chapter of "Music in America."

That mongrel operatic enterprise was at the time of its organization launched on its voyage by preliminary announcements surpassing in shallow, bombastic language, and in promises impossible to realize, any announcement that ever emanated from the private office of a New York operatic manager from the time when Garcia first placed his foot on American soil, up to the Ullmans, the Maretzeks, the Strakoschs, the Graus, the Maplesons. I will quote from the "Prospectus," as issued by Mr. Locke, the manager, a few sentences, in order to show what was promised — we all know how those promises were kept: —

> "It has been deemed not only desirable, but it has been felt to be just, that a broadly American spirit should animate the direction of the movement which has resulted in the announcement we have above made. The plan upon which it is based is so thoroughly national, and its execution so characteristically American, that its most bitter opponents will scarcely decry it as being tainted by foreign influence."

Well, I doubt whether, after the failure of the American Opera-Company, and in view of the manner in which that failure came about, the American people felt inclined to endorse that kind of "American spirit" and the "execution so characteristically American."

"It need hardly be said that the main features of the present movement are its *national* and its *practical* character. It is an honest attempt to prove to America that she has artists of her own who require but her encouragement to gather to her side and do her lasting honor. . . . As far as operatic works are concerned, America is in the background, but it is hoped that the results of the present undertaking may develop composers. Encouragement will be given them, and their works will be produced from time to time."

American artists have not "gathered to her side," but have badly dispersed. American composers have not been given any "encouragement"; and the idea of having their works performed "from time to time" by the National Opera-Company could hardly have entered seriously the minds of the managers of that concern.

The idea of giving operas in the English language, for the understanding and enjoyment of English-speaking audiences, was not a new discovery on the part of those who assumed the management of the National Opera-Company, but the plan of giving "opera sung by Americans, under the musical direction of Theodore Thomas," created curiosity and attracted at the same time a certain degree of interest. People alive to the progress of American art wished the management of the new operatic venture all success. The persons at the head of the enterprise, however, commenced their labors at the top of the ladder. If it had been wisely and intelligently managed at its start on the perilous operatic voyage, if gradual growth and a sincere endeavor towards permanency had been constantly kept in view, if a little more art-gain and little less personal pecuniary gain had been the ultimate aims of the managers, the existence of the National Opera would have been built on a sure and lasting foundation. Then the concern,

with uncommonly large pecuniary resources behind it, would not have foundered in such a brisk and unexpected manner, — even before it was fairly well started on its course of operations.

The National Opera-Company — though not quite American in all its appointments — comprised a number of fair and, in some few cases, able singers. The chorus was acceptable, better even than that of the Metropolitan German Opera-Company; the orchestra — as all Thomas's orchestras are — a fine one; the sceneries did not present those old shabby traces of long use such as one was accustomed to see at the Academy of Music; the *mise en scène* was pretty well in harmony with the artistic requirements of each opera given. Though the performances did not present any particularly inspiring musico-dramatic points, yet they reached, at any rate, a few degrees above dull mediocrity. The operas performed during the company's existence, lasting about two seasons, were Goetz's "The Taming of the Shrew," Gluck's "Orpheus," Wagner's "Lohengrin" and "The Flying Dutchman," Meyerbeer's "Huguenots," Gounod's "Faust," Verdi's "Aïda," Délibes' "Lachmé," Rubinstein's "Nero," Mozart's "Magic Flute," Nicolai's "Merry Wives of Windsor," Flotow's "Martha." The company had opened its first season at the Academy of Music, Feb. 28, 1886. This was a promising beginning. To be sure, the managers found at first comparatively few obstacles in the way to their swift ascent to the top of the operatic ladder, to use the simile. Well sustained by an incessant and rich flow of funds, they balanced up there very gracefully, and advantageously exhibited their youthful gymnastic operatic accomplishments. But — as gossip has it — when

$1,500,000 were sung out of the pockets of those unlucky shareholders (this sum includes, of course, the casual earnings of the company), the ladder began to topple, and suddenly landed the whole American Opera-Company in the dust. *Sic transit gloria!*

CHAPTER XXIV.

SURVEY OF THE PRESENT STATE OF MUSICAL ACTIVITY.

Opera. — In looking over the whole field of musical culture during the past decade, the close observer will be struck by the universal activity reigning in the artistic and industrial branches of American musical art-practice. In all directions encouraging progress is to be seen. We are fast becoming a musical people; but, though some sanguine apostles of native American art do not hesitate to proclaim — generally for interested ends — that we already have reached the pinnacle of musico-æsthetic culture, the experienced, intelligent judge, impartial in his views, cosmopolitan in his taste, will point out by directing attention to true historical facts the many serious shortcomings which characterize our present musical situation.

The modern true music-lover expects to find in a large city, which boasts of its musical culture, regular series of orchestral concerts, chamber-music *soirées*, oratorio, and other vocal performances, all presented in a modern artistic style. Among the cycles of public concerts he counts upon the representation of the different forms of the lyrical drama.

There is, at present, only one city in the United States in which all these features of modern musical culture are to be found — New York. Boston comes next to it, but it has to borrow its short season of opera-

performances from New York; New York without an opera means also Boston without one. In the preceding pages I have shown the so far precarious existence of the lyrical drama in America.

In Italy, in Germany, in France — to mention only the countries most universally musical — cities, with less than the tenth part of New York's population, have every year a season of operatic performances lasting a number of months. We are often told, as an excuse for the financial failures of operatic enterprises in America, that in European cities operatic institutions, in order to be able to live, receive a regular subvention either from the general or the municipal government. But we must not forget that the money thus spent comes from the pockets of the people, who, as a rule, cheerfully grant these outlays to be spent in the interest of national art-culture, and are proud of their national genius as exhibited in the art-productions of their children. Art in every form is, in most European countries, a highly important national affair; its high standard bears witness to a nation's æsthetic, intellectual, and moral character. Without this art ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome would possess only a small part of that which continually attracts the modern student to their ruins, to the fragments of their writings.

The idea of granting, in the interest of the lyrical drama, subventions on the part of the national government, or of that of cities, is in the United States in many respects an unpractical one. Such art-culture would, in a very short period of time, come into the possession of political cliques, and fall a prey to unprincipled speculators. Every person, who, in America, cares for æsthetic culture and amusement, is far

better able to pay for it than the great majority of people in European cities. If the American people desire, driven by an imperious inner æsthetic necessity, fine lyrico-dramatic performances, they will have it, *coûte que coûte.* But since such enterprises have had, so far, such precarious fortune, we invariably have to come to the conclusion that opera is — except by, comparatively, a very small fraction of the population — not yet wanted. Its existence here rests on an artificially prepared ground. New York has over thirty theatres of all characters; they all seem to do good business. If, in the same proportion, New York were a musical city, one opera-house, in spite of the great outlay it requires in order to keep such an institution in working order, would not suffice to accommodate all who would be desirous of enjoying the representations of fine operatic works; there would then be ample room for German, Italian, and French opera. The same considerations hold good regarding Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis, San Francisco, to mention the largest cities only. New Orleans, a smaller city than either of these, holds on to its French opera.

If the artistic conditions were favorable to the existence of the lyrical drama, what a large and advantageous field would there be for our rising singers to practise their art in; while now, in order to "find a living," they have to cater for favor on some European stage. It is all very fine to exclaim with national pride, "this singer, now successful in Paris, that one engaged in London," are Americans. Yes, we produce the raw material for export only; for, as a general rule, the American singer seeks his artistic training, as well as a lucrative permanent engagement, in old Europe. We, surely, have not

much reason to be proud of such proceedings; in the face of these stubborn facts, we must confess that we are not yet a genuinely musical people. We have the intellectual capacity to learn to sing, to learn to play, but we cannot force unmusical people to listen to us, if they do not desire to do so; and experience proves that the immense majority of Americans do not desire to do so. It is with them still a matter of temporary curiosity, but a permanent art-enterprise cannot be built on a passing curiosity. The above remarks hold good with regard to the introduction of the serious lyrical drama, the grand opera. The opera comique, this refined, unique form of lyrical comedy, as originally developed by French musical genius, is, with the exception of New Orleans, not much known, neither is it cultivated, in the United States. Some English companies have, in former times, given representations of French comic operas, but the form has never gained foothold here. But the opera-bouffe, as made popular by Offenbach, and industriously cultivated by his French, German, and English imitators and successors, is, as presented on the stage of the New-York Casino, well patronized. There are also several small opera-companies mostly composed of English and American singers, travelling through the country, and endeavoring casually to entertain "our country cousins" with such and such a musical extravaganza. Some of our American composers have also tried their hands at the composition of similar works, but so far with little tangible success.

Orchestras.—The next weak point in our general musical culture is the want, in our large cities, of efficient orchestral organizations. New York and Boston are, so far, the only American cities where permanent orchestral

societies are to be found. In New York, the home of hundreds of able orchestral players on all the different instruments, not less than four excellent organizations are giving, during the winter season, symphonic concerts of a high order, viz.: the Philharmonic Society, the Symphony Society, the Thomas Orchestra, and the Seidl Orchestra. But here now there seems to be an *embarras de richesse.* It is an open secret that, with the exception of the Philharmonic Society, some of the other organizations had, at the end of the season, to meet unpleasant deficits. In Chapter XIV. I have explained the secret of the Philharmonic Society's permanent existence; even if the receipts of the subscriptions were not as large as they are now, the society, if determined to do so, could exist. The Symphony Society, like the Brooklyn Philharmonic Society, is managed by a board of directors, who engage the required number of musicians and pay expenses. Mr. Seidl and Mr. Thomas engage their own orchestras, and are the sole responsible persons in regard to the pecuniary results of their ventures.

Last winter, when Mr. Thomas changed the basis of his operations from Steinway Hall (the Steinways had been Mr. Thomas's mainstay for a number of years) to Chickering Hall, the New York press and the public interested in orchestral music had a good deal to say about the impossibility of keeping up in New York a permanent orchestral organization, dependent solely on the receipts of the box-office and voluntary contributions on the part of a few generous musical friends. It has been proved that the getting up of fine orchestral concerts in New York is a very expensive matter, and that there are not enough musical people in the

city who care for such concerts. As a rule each orchestral player receives $7 for a concert performance including one rehearsal, and $2 for each extra rehearsal. An orchestra of sixty-four musicians — the size of the regular orchestra of the German opera at the Metropolitan Opera-House — would cost $448; one extra rehearsal $128 more; and every additional rehearsal in the same proportion more, for it often takes several extra rehearsals in order to do justice to some modern and difficult compositions; add to these items rent for hall, advertisements, purchase of music, and several other incidental expenses, and the sum will easily grow to $1,000 per concert. It would thus require an audience of one thousand people, paying $1 per head, merely to defray the expenses of one concert. The orchestra of the Philharmonic Society is composed of one hundred performers; if an agent or a conductor were to engage such an orchestra, he would have to be prepared to meet the sum of at least $1,500 of outlay. Now the Philharmonic Society, the Symphony Society, and Mr. Thomas gave each six evening concerts, and Mr. Seidl gave five. The four organizations gave thus among them together, in the course of six months, from November to May, twenty-three concerts, averaging about *one concert per week* during the season. Now, for experiment's sake, let us see how many regular subscribers it would take to enable these different organizations to pay expenses and also to make a small profit, for it is a well-known fact that such concert enterprises cannot be given without some guarantee; there is not yet a large enough floating musical population in New York willing and desirous to patronize fine orchestral concerts. Let us stand by an orchestra of sixty-four musicians, and allow the sum of $1,200

expenses per concert, so as to give the conductor a margin for the casual increase of his band. The twenty-three regular subscription concerts would require an outlay of $27,600, a mere bagatelle for rich New York. Suppose we allow each one of the above organizations a list of two thousand subscribers, each one paying $6 for the course of concerts (the Philharmonic's is $10); this would make eight thousand persons paying for the twenty-three concerts $46,000. By deducting the $27,600 expenses from that sum, we get a benefit of $18,400 to be divided among the four organizations, — the profit of each one would be small, but it would not be a deficit. But since — with the sole exception of the Philharmonic Society — the others had to pay, at the end of the season, more or less considerable deficits. it is clear that their regular subscription lists did not contain two thousand subscribers; and since it is a well-known fact that many musical persons, fond of fine orchestral concerts, generally subscribe to two or even more of the above series of concerts, the number eight thousand will shrink somewhat. It becomes thus apparent that among New York's 1,500,000 inhabitants we do not find the small fraction of eight thousand persons musically educated enough to patronize, at the small expense of $6 per winter season, first-class orchestral concerts given at the rate of one a week! With the aid of these figures we may well imagine the fate of those who venture to give symphonic concerts without being backed by some guarantee. It is the general complaint of those persons who have, in some financial way, been connected with the getting up of fine orchestral concerts, that the people's taste is not yet ripe for symphonic music. The general cry is: If a number of wealthy

persons, lovers of orchestral music, were willing to pay the deficits of such enterprises, — the inevitable lot of the stockholders of the Metropolitan Opera-House, — fine symphonic concerts could be given regularly, and the musical reputation of New York would, in this respect, be saved. As matters are now, one symphonic concert per week is more than New York can stand! It will take years of hard educational work in the interest of the higher branches of musical art, to create appreciative audiences large enough to draw from a sufficient number willing to patronize fine orchestral concerts in so liberal a spirit as to warrant their unhampered existence. Mr. Thomas, with a fine orchestra, some years ago tried, in his summer concerts, to popularize orchestral music rendered in an artistic style, but failed for want of continued support on the part of the New York public. For the last two summer seasons Mr. Seidl, engaged by the Brighton Hotel Company, has given, with his splendid German opera orchestra of sixty-four musicians, two concerts daily at the Brighton Beach Music Hall; and although the price of admission has been only twenty-five cents, — popular prices, — the venture did not receive, on the part of the musical people of Brooklyn and neighboring places, the liberal support it so deeply deserved. The following items will testify to the magnitude, variety, and catholicity of Mr. Seidl's scheme, as laid down in his Brighton Beach concert work, accomplished during the past summer season of *three months*. One hundred and seventy-two concerts were given, presenting the works of one hundred and twenty-nine composers, belonging to all the different nationalities of Europe and America. Such an enormous quantity of pieces of all styles, from the serious

classic symphony or the musico-dramatic fragment of the romantic opera, to the graceful trifle in the dance or simple *Lied* form, and all played in a superior manner, has never been heard in New York during a winter season lasting six months.

Boston is now well provided with one fine orchestral organization, the Symphony Orchestra, established in 1879. It consists of from sixty to seventy men, and is complete in all its equipments. The members of the Symphony Orchestra are engaged to play exclusively at the concerts of this organization; contracts are made with each player individually; all are paid well, and the discipline is thorough.

The sole backer of the orchestra is Mr. Henry L. Higginson, — a wealthy banker, an educated man, and a connoisseur of music. For several seasons the venture was a big drain on his purse, owing to the low prices (twenty-five and fifty cents) of admission fee to the concerts of the Symphony Orchestra. But, finding that speculators got hold of the season tickets, Mr. Higginson thought he might as well have the premiums, and the tickets were put up at auction. Then the tide changed, and the venture has since been self-sustaining, and even earned a profit. The business of the organization is managed by Mr. Higginson. The conductor selects and arranges the programmes. A concert takes place every week, on Saturday evening, and is preceded by a public rehearsal, given on Friday afternoon. About twenty-four concerts are given during the season. The Symphony Orchestra provides also a series of Young People's Popular Concerts, etc., and occasionally visits other cities east and west.

The concerts of the Symphony Orchestra are now

well patronized by the Boston public, and — as gossip has it — Mr. Higginson has been reported as saying that, in case of his demise, the concerts would be found to be established on a permanent basis, and would be given as long as the public should feel a desire for their continuance.

Brooklyn has every winter a regular series of successful Philharmonic concerts, managed by a board of directors consisting of musical gentlemen from the city. These concerts were established in 1857.

Baltimore has an orchestral organization connected with the Peabody Institute. It is composed of about fifty players, under the conductorship of Asger Hamerik. Formerly the season comprised eight concerts; now it is fixed at six. Each concert is preceded by a public rehearsal.

The *Milwaukee Musikverein* engages for its series of concerts an orchestra of about fifty players, selected from the resident orchestral musicians. Bach's orchestra, consisting of twenty-five players, is the only organization of the sort giving weekly concerts at the Turner-hall. Plans are ripening, however, for the establishment of a well-balanced, permanent orchestra.

Chicago, as shown above, is the home of numerous able orchestra players, and the establishment of an efficient symphony orchestra, placed on a permanent basis, is said to be in the near future. Let a Chicago Higginson come forward, and the talked-of intention will quickly become a reality. Chicago is wealthy, and large enough to provide a good number of appreciative musical amateurs for the effective patronage of such concerts.

Cleveland is reported to have an orchestral organiza-

tion, the Philharmonic Orchestra, of about forty-five members, which, under the conductorship of Emil Ring, gives four concerts during the season.

Detroit has The Symphony Society, consisting of thirty-five players, which, under R. Spiel's leadership, gave three concerts last season.

Buffalo is encouraging the Orchestra Organization; conductor, J. Lund. Eight concerts of different character have taken place last season.

The *St. Louis* Musical Union, conductor, A. Waldauer, as mentioned above, gives five concerts during the winter season, and is well patronized.

In *Minneapolis* there is a small orchestra, under the leadership of F. Dantz, endeavoring to create a taste there for fine orchestral compositions.

The *Des Moines* Gerberich's Orchestra is also regularly in the field, and presents good programmes. The band consists of about thirty-five men.

San Francisco seems to be backward still in its patronage of orchestral music. There is a small band, however, managing to get up during the season a few good concerts.

A friend writes me from *Los Angeles*, that their Philharmonic Society (vocal and instrumental) has so far labored quite hard in the interest of good music. At some of their concerts the conductor, A. Willhartitz, got together a tolerably good band of about forty musicians, playing symphonies, overtures, etc., quite acceptably.

The above are about all the places from which I have been able to get any exact information regarding the cultivation of fine orchestral music. To be sure, every good-sized city of the Union, with a large German pop-

ulation, has its more or less numerous band of players, giving regular concerts in connection with some Männerchor, at the Turnerhall or some German theatre; and, since the orchestras in America are, as a general rule, composed of German musicians, the work done by these bands will gradually prepare the field for future growth. The young generations of German-Americans have thus an opportunity to gain a taste for orchestral music, and, when grown up to manhood, they often become fervent patrons of concert enterprises of a more cosmopolitan character, patronized by all musical people, irrespective of nationality. The casual visits of the Boston Symphony Orchestra or the Thomas Orchestra, giving a couple of concerts in a place, do not prove that a real musical public is to be found there. The great majority of such audiences are attracted to those passing entertainments merely from curiosity. These organizations have a New-York or Boston reputation, and in the West it belongs to *le bon ton* to have been at their concerts. The real test of the state of musical taste in a city is, above all, to be looked for in the character and work of its home organizations. Where these are absent, or in a crippled state, true love for real musical culture is not to be found, except among a very small minority of people.

Chamber-Music. — The divers forms of chamber-music (see Chap. XIV.) find now warm devotees in many of the large cities east and west. There is no doubt that musical amateurs, able to appreciate and understand these exquisite forms of music, — to the cultivation of which Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, etc., have devoted some of the best efforts of their genius, — can claim with right a fore-

most place among sincere lovers of musical art. But so far, those musical persons who most assiduously study chamber-music compositions are principally foreigners. The American young man very rarely studies the playing of a stringed instrument; and the cornet, the drum, — those aggravating, noisy solo vehicles, — or the twanging, nasal, weak-sounding banjo, have not yet enlisted the æsthetic interest of the composer of chamber-music effects; and I hardly think that those trivial, vulgar, demonstrative instruments — especially as played by amateurs — will ever find room in the scores of the well-educated, refined composer.

Able professional musicians in large cities, especially in New York and Boston, form clubs for the public performances of chamber-music in its divers branches, and several such organizations make extended concert tours through the States.

SINGING-SOCIETIES.

Choral Music. — Amateur vocal societies, such as male, female, and mixed choruses, are now to be found all over the United States. One hundred and thirty-five small and large cities report over four hundred singing-societies; Philadelphia alone is the home of over sixty societies, of which the great majority, however, are small German male glee clubs. In fact, one will not be far wrong in assigning to the German-American population three-fourths of the whole number of existing vocal societies. But, strange to report, with the exception of perhaps a dozen, these German singing-societies are all exclusively composed of men-singers. The young German woman does not find a place there, and

yet she is generally more musical than her brother; for all well-to-do German parents have pianoforte instruction given to their daughters. A German musical gentleman, whom I asked the reason for this exclusion of the woman from the German singing-societies in America, could not very well account for it. "We had at one time," said he, "a mixed chorus, and had arranged alternate nights for the practice of mixed choral and male choral music. It went pretty well for about two years, when gradually the men began to drop out from the rehearsals of the mixed chorus evenings; the ladies were very punctual and attentive at rehearsals, but finally we had to give up the mixed chorus evening for want of a sufficient number of male singers."

Over a hundred years ago, J. A. Hiller, the eminent singing-teacher, conductor, and composer of comic operas, who has done so much for the establishment of amateur chorus societies in Germany, already complained at the neglect of teaching girls singing at school:—

"It is a great shortcoming that the female sex has no part in the study of singing in schools. The first purpose of this is to educate singers for the church: and, in consequence of a most ridiculous prejudice, woman is excluded from a thing of which she is the brightest ornament, and in the participation of which she certainly has as much right as those screaming, harsh soprano and alto singing men and boys with or without beards."

Of course, musical-society matters in Germany are, in this regard, better regulated now. As I have already given in the preceding pages many programmes of different chorus societies, marking their musical aims and progress, I consider it needless to name here all such doings of every additional new singing-society that has

been recently organized. Musical culture, as promoted by the establishment and work of societies, is now based on familiar artistic features; a new society generally follows the course of some older ones. First performances of known compositions, to be sure, may be novelties in the West though old affairs in the East, but such musical occurrences are of local importance only. The artistic duties and aims of amateur musical societies are now all clearly traced; and any such society, ambitious enough to take a front rank among the musical societies of the land, has to have a good constitution to stand upon and the pluck to live up to it.

The above-given figures, regarding the approximate number of existing musical societies throughout the United States, prove that amateur musical work is spreading in every direction and awakening a true musical spirit among all classes of the people. All these features present many encouraging points in the interest of future development of musical art in America. But — and this point must be accentuated here as of supreme importance — it is the imperious duty of the true amateur to endeavor to extend the artistic horizon of his musical aims, and not be satisfied with the one-sided work which, in a narrow sense, necessarily marks the amateur's artistic sphere. The adequate performance of fine choral works (not *a cappella* compositions), whether in large, complex, or restricted forms, needs the co-operation of an able orchestra. As pointed out above, few cities of the Union can to-day boast of efficient orchestral organizations. Now, in order for the rendering of fine oratorios, cantatas, etc., to become a harmonious complete whole, the entire true tone-picture as formed by a master-hand, and not a mere sketch as

when sung with pianoforte accompaniment only, encourage the establishment of home orchestral organizations, even if done at the beginning on a moderate scale; the benefit in an artistic sense will be the vocal society's, which will thus not need, in order to do regular concert work, to wait for the casual visit of a New-York or Boston travelling band. Every city of one hundred thousand inhabitants has a number of able orchestral players employed at theatres, and has thus the right material at hand.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Music in the Public Schools. — The above considerations naturally lead us to take a glance at the work of the public schools regarding the study of elementary vocal music, the rich source from which amateur chorus-singers are drawn.

In Chapter XII. I have given the historical account of the introduction of elementary vocal music in the public schools at Boston, whence it gradually spread to the schools of other American cities. The progress made in that direction during the past half-century certainly presents many commendable, encouraging points. The utility of the study of vocal music in the public schools is now generally conceded; but there are still found many school officers of cities of importance who fail to see any good in music, and are therefore opposed to its study. Yet it is more or less systematically taught in a vast number of city schools in the country. I will quote here a passage from a report of the United States Commissioner of Education, viz.: —

"That there are many advantages to be gained by means of music is very evident, but it may be fairly a question whether it is the business of the schools to teach this subject as an art, and measure the progress of the pupils by the amount of pleasing harmony they can produce at a given time. As drawing is taught, not to make a finished draughtsman, but to train the judgment and secure attentive observation, so music should be directed toward training the mind in such a way as to give it more power, not merely in the production of sweet sounds, but in performing the ordinary duties of life."

This passage rightly defines the scope of musical education in the public schools; placed on such a sound moral basis, it cannot help becoming a great æsthetic force in the life of young people. But it is unfortunately also to be noticed that in many city schools where the study of music had been introduced, it failed on account of the inefficiency of the music-teacher to answer the expectations of the school board, and consequently was discarded as a loss of time to the scholars. The want of an intelligent, comprehensible method or system, based on sound pedagogic principles, repeatedly caused more confusion than utility. "These methods," justly remarks the Report, "seemed more of a disadvantage than an advantage, as none of the principles which underlie a knowledge of music were understood."

It was, as I have shown in a previous chapter of this work, an intelligent, broad-minded American school-master, Mr. Woodbridge, who first thoroughly appreciated the needs and benefit of elementary vocal instruction in the public schools. Another distinguished educator, Horace Mann, also keenly felt the importance of vocal instruction. He saw the great difficulties which confronted the advocates of this part of elementary school education, but he unhesitatingly persevered in recom-

mending its instruction, wherever feasible. He says in one of his addresses : —

"Unhappily there are but few persons in our community competent to teach the art even of vocal music. We are an un-musical — not to say an anti-musical — people. No hereditary taste has descended to us. Our Pilgrim fathers residing in Massachusetts were too stern a race, and their souls were occupied by interests too mighty and too absorbing, to afford them either leisure or inclination to cultivate music as a refinement or an embellishment of life."

I am pleased to record here that with every decade the inefficiency, as pointed out by Mann, is gradually disappearing, though there remains room enough for improvement. In many cities the school funds are not sufficient to employ a salaried elementary vocal teacher; and so the task of having the children learn to sing their little songs, generally by rote, falls upon the school-teacher. But, we may ask, why should the school-teacher not be able to teach the, in a theoretical way, simple matter of elementary vocal music? Luther appropriately said: "A school-master must know how to sing, otherwise I do not respect him."

As a rule, the school-teacher has more (at least he ought to have more) understanding and knowledge of a system based on rational practical pedagogy, than a tenth-rate music-teacher who out of school was a success neither as an instrumental nor as a vocal teacher. The amount of theoretical musical matter to be acquired, in order to become a good elementary vocal teacher, is not so multifarious and difficult as to task the teacher's mental powers to an inordinate degree.

The school-teacher is the regularly appointed disciplinary mentor of his or her classes. He or she knows well the children's dispositions, and — there can be no

doubt about it—can influence them better regarding all their school work than can a heterogeneous music element that mechanically enters the classes once or twice a week, and just as mechanically leads them to sing. If the school-teachers, during the time they frequented the public schools as pupils, had enjoyed a good elementary vocal instruction, there would be no difficulty for them, when having themselves advanced to the position of teachers, in instructing, in their turn, their classes in music also. Here the want of a rational, simple method, regarding the teaching of vocal music in the schools, becomes painfully apparent. There is nothing more beautiful and inspiring to a class of healthy children than the opening and closing of their daily intellectual task by the singing of a simple, but truly melodious song; words and music must not be too pretentious, neither too sentimental, but adapted to the comprehension of children. The utter absence of happy, cheerful song is especially to be noticed in the schools of rural districts. This simple accomplishment does not seem to be very burdensome to the teacher. In many parts in Europe the school-teacher, being very often a good organist or a good pianist, is the teacher of vocal music of his classes also.

To be sure, there are in American schools some able music-teachers, who work with intelligence and zeal; but the method of engaging grammar-school music-teachers prevalent in many large cities is not the most appropriate one to secure the services of the ablest and fittest persons. Interested in this important part of children's education, I have made inquiries of musical persons residing in different parts of the country—persons entirely impartial in their views on the subject

— as to the standard of vocal music as taught in the public schools of these cities. Here are some of the answers to my questions: "The vocal music teacher is totally inefficient; he has much to say about this and that method, but has so far failed to teach well according to any one." — "The music in our schools was making good progress, when, one fine morning, the old teacher, for no cause whatever (as far as any one knows), was dismissed, and another one put in his place; and then the old singing-book had to make place to a new kind (I have already bought several different ones for my children) published by a firm influential with the new teacher; all these changes caused a good deal of confusion, and the new teacher seems to lack the experience to rectify it." — "The method used in our grammar schools was the one called the 'movable do'; then we had for some time the 'tonic sol-fa'; now the superintendent of music is, for some reason best known to him, returning to the old method; the children do not sing much better than when they had no method." — "Yes, we tried the 'fixed do' method, but neither the teacher nor the children could get hold of it. Lately there was a man here who gave a lecture on the 'tonic sol-fa' method, and formed a volunteer class to teach them this method gratis, in order to convince the gentlemen of the school board and other persons interested in vocal music that this is the only right and lucid method. For a few lessons things went on swimmingly; but gradually one after the other of the volunteer pupils dropped out. The 'fixed do' teacher was mightily afraid of the 'tonic sol-faer,' but having political influence in the board, he thinks he will be able to manage to keep his place without being obliged to learn a new

method; the old one causes him trouble enough." — "Our children sing mostly by rote. Our music-teacher seems to have neither a good voice nor a just ear. Musical persons affirm that the children sing badly out of tune." — Etc.

The above-quoted "Report of the Commissioner of Education" says: —

"Although words of commendation for music appear in nearly every city report received, it must be said, however, that musical instruction is not always satisfactory. Where so many different systems of instruction exist, there must necessarily be degrees of excellence; it is even possible that systems may be found in which defects largely counterbalance the excellences."

These remarks touch the same sore points revealed by the information gathered from the above reports of my correspondents, viz.: lack of a simple, clear, comprehensive method or system of elementary vocal music. There is considerable difference of opinion as to the advisability of employing special teachers of music. Mr. John Jasper, city superintendent of the New York schools, recommends: —

"Inasmuch as the by-laws now provide that all candidates for a teacher's license shall be examined in music and in drawing, and as the teachers employed before the addition of these qualifications have had sufficient time to prepare themselves to teach these subjects, that the by-laws be so amended as to prohibit the further appointment of special teachers of music and drawing."

Apropos of these recommendations on the part of Mr. Jasper, I will quote part of a letter to me, written by one of the teachers of vocal music in some of New York's public schools; the letter gives a clear *exposé* of the manner music is taught there: —

"There is no regular musical superintendent. Whatever is done in the way of examination in music is done by one of the superintendents of the other branches. The instructors in music are supposed to be professional, and the lessons are given to the various classes, once a week in some schools, and twice a month in others. The reason of this difference is, that some schools are so large that it is impossible for a music-teacher to go to them oftener. The exercises are written by the music-teacher on a blackboard in the presence of the regular teacher. Each exercise is to be practised until the music-teacher comes again. In some schools, books or charts are used. In regard to method — there is no regular method. Each teacher does the best he can. There is a plan of musical instruction, according to which the teachers are expected to work, but it is decidedly vague. . . . The time to be given for practising all musical lessons is *ten minutes each day*."

The music-teachers in the New York schools are said to be, as a rule, faithful in their work, but it seems rather difficult to expect great results from work to be done in so short a time. Still there is progress in that direction. Besides the degree of pure delight and beauty it imparts to the minds and souls of the children, singing is of great value in strengthening their lungs and developing their vocal organs. Justly remarks Mr. Jasper: —

"This subject is steadily gaining ground, not merely as regards proficiency in reading or executing vocal music, but in the improvement it is working in the perception of sounds, and in the consequent softness and roundness in uttering ordinary speech."

Although the movement is still in its first uncertain state of progress, the results so far attained are nevertheless encouraging; and each new decade of experience will gradually impress on the whole system of elementary vocal instruction the right rational direction, and will finally elevate it to the important position of a preparatory *national musical training-school* closely and in-

timately connected with primary intellectual education of the children of the nation.

The following will prove the good musical work school-children are able to do, when systematically taught by experienced teachers. Some years ago at a musical festival on the Rhine, given under the auspices of the public schools, the school-masters and their school-children sung to the admiration of the connoisseurs, among other fine compositions, Palestrina's famous "Missa Papæ Marcelli," as originally written in six parts. Anybody acquainted with this intricate composition will be able to judge of the high standard of these school-children's musical training, acquired according to the plan of primary school education, and under the direct instruction of the regular school-masters. Where is the school district in the United States whose school-teachers and school-children are able to give similar musical performances? There are, indeed, very few amateur musical societies here able to perform that mass in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

The following statistics, taken from the above-quoted "Report of the Commissioner of Education" will, regarding the present subject, be found interesting: —

"Of the 96 cities where no instruction in music is given, 6 report that singing is permitted; 15 that it is encouraged; 12 of them have organs; 2 have pianos and organs, and 1 has a melodeon, which instruments are used to lead the occasional rote-singing, while the other 81 places possess no musical instruments for such use.

"132 superintendents of cities report where instruction is given exclusively by the ordinary teaching force. Of these, 50 appear to teach either by rote or without system; 14 use the fixed do; 51 the movable do; 2 use the tonic sol-fa only; the rest use two or more of these methods variously combined and modified. Most of these have musical instruments; and 73 of them mention various text-

books and charts. The time devoted to music varies from one to three and three-quarters hours, according to the degree of importance attached to this study.

"19 superintendents of cities report only special teachers for music in their public schools: 2 of these teach by fixed do; 13 by movable do; and the others use mixed methods.

"Of the 96 cities and towns employing special instructors, in addition to the ordinary teachers for regular instruction in music, 65 use the movable do; 6 use the fixed do; 3 use tonic sol-fa; and the other 22 use various combinations or modifications."

Among the two hundred and forty-seven places teaching vocal music, one hundred and seventy-one have it in "all grades"; over a million of school-children receive thus some sort of elementary vocal music instruction. If the children, from the time of their first entrance into the public schoolroom to that of their fourteenth or fifteenth year, were taught vocal music, according to a simple, lucid, but thorough method, every city of the Union would be able to boast of a large number of efficient chorus-singers; true church music, as well as institutions for oratorio performances, could then be amply supplied with well-trained amateur chorus-singers. We ask of the orchestral player, to be able to read readily, at first sight, any instrumental part written for his special instrument. Any conductor of chorus knows that amateur chorus-singers need weeks and weeks of hard practice in order to be able to master a moderate number of pages of more or less difficult chorus music, written within the small compass of from about one octave to an octave and a half. The efforts to master rhythm, time, and tone-pitch, consume the greater part of most precious time, — things which children, when rationally taught, learn with comparative ease.

Who studies Music. — The above remarks naturally lead us to the consideration of another important question bearing on the ultimate results of vocal instruction as given in the public schools, and the class of children enabled to profit by it. Any casual observer must have perceived, that, as a rule, the American woman is the *musician of the land.* She not alone receives private instruction in singing or on the pianoforte, whenever her parents can afford to engage a music-teacher, but she also enjoys the privilege of being able to attend school for a longer period of time, and has consequently greater opportunity to profit by vocal instruction, as taught in school, than her brother. The American boy generally leaves the public schools at the age of about fourteen years, to enter as apprentice to some business; a comparatively small number of boys stay at school until they are able to go through the high school. The girl is in the majority at the high school; she sings solos at the high-school exhibitions. But this not alone holds good as regards the girl's opportunity to become musically a good sight-reader during her stay at the public schools — at least, one has a right to expect her to become so; peruse the lists of pupils that frequent the numerous music schools of all styles to be found in the cities throughout the land, and you will perceive an infinitesimal fraction of boy-pupils. The great colleges for young women, the young ladies' seminaries, boarding-schools, etc., all offer ample opportunity for the study of music in some form or other.

Musical *matinées* of all sorts, as given in large and small cities, are almost exclusively patronized by women; whenever and wherever a musical society is formed, women, able to read music well, are in the majority

over men. Since young American gentleman are, in imitation of the German men-societies, establishing male glee clubs, the ladies, being better musicians, have naturally established in their turn ladies' singing-clubs. The woman goes to musical lectures, and has earnestly taken up the study of musical history, harmony, and composition.

The American boy, when out of school, very seldom receives any sort of musical instruction; he generally also soon forgets the degree of knowledge of reading music, which he may have gained while at school. The boarding-schools for boys, the military schools, the seminaries, do not provide — as far as I can gather — instruction in elementary vocal music. To be sure, here and there we find a few boys, taking lessons on the flute, cornet, banjo, or the drum, seldom on the pianoforte or the violin. Among the great colleges for young men, Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania alone have chairs for a musical professorship; the professor at Yale College simply fills the position of an organist. Young men's college glee and banjo clubs are private affairs for temporary amusement.

Young Men's Christian Association. — The above-mentioned deficiency regarding the boy's elementary musical training during his school work at the public schools, explains his general want of interest, when grown up to manhood, in all that belongs to musical art, be it in the church or in social life. Take, for instances, that great and important "Young Men's Christian Association," comprising many thousand members of all classes; but besides a little hymn-tune singing, done during their social gatherings, or at great conventions, these intelligent young men, with voices to sing, have,

for want of a little simple knowledge in reading music, so far neither thought of, nor been able to, open such gatherings by means of appropriate strains of an art which, in its pure æsthetic and moral effects of beauty, is more closely connected with religious and social acts than any other. Even the simple hymn-tune will gain in inspiring and impressive effectiveness, when harmonized in a simple, noble form, and sung, beautifully and harmoniously blended, by tenors and basses, according to the indications and provisions of nature.

To my inquiries at headquarters, regarding the attention paid to musical practice, by the different branches of the "Young Men's Christian Association" throughout the land, the following passages, taken from the answers sent me, will be of interest.

"The facts which you ask for have never been collected from the Association, and I suppose the chief reason why they have not been, is, that it has been claimed that the Associations are doing very little indeed in this direction. Dr. Ritter is right in regard to the value of music in our work; but this is one of many things which have never yet been developed. Inquiry made in 1885 showed that 48 Associations had classes in vocal music. No doubt the number has increased considerably since, but almost all of them are so elementary that I doubt whether Dr. Ritter will care to make mention of them. A few Associations have glee clubs and orchestras, but I have not heard of any that have attained special excellence."

"Dr. Ritter claims that it is a wonderful lever to attract and hold that large class of young men who have a love for singing; he has certainly suggested a big point, and no doubt it can be worked up in some convention."

By all means let this important point be agitated, not alone in the convention, but also in every separate Association. Provide, wherever it is feasible, lessons in vocal music for those members who may have for-

gotten their notes, or who never had an opportunity to learn them; from these classes, easily trained during a year's intelligent practice, build up your glee clubs, which then would never lack efficient members. In this way the needed systematic homogeneity would be imparted to the movement. The young man, moving from this to that city, would be thus enabled to take his part among his comrades, without confusion, without hesitation. This additional æsthetic accomplishment would afford those young men who are wont to pass, especially in large cities, a number of evenings in the rooms of the Association, a welcome, pure, and refining diversion. The ancient Greeks, those educators *par excellence*, justly counted *gymnastics and music* among the prominent elements in the education of young men. The first of these is being introduced into every Association; now join to it its beautiful companion, and the noble ends of the Association will be enhanced by additional worthy and refining aims.[1]

Music in the Church.— In the Protestant churches a better style of musical performances and more serious and better fitting compositions are being introduced. In many congregations the young people begin to organize choruses, to join with the regular quartet in the rendering of anthems, and other short sacred pieces by the best modern English composers and their imitators in this country. In the large, rich Catholic churches the sacred compositions of the great Catholic masters are being more frequently introduced, and effectively sung by efficient choruses. Beautiful organs are being erected in large and commodious church-

[1] See my lecture on the development of musical art in its relation to the progress of intellectual life of ancient and modern nations.

buildings, and the study of the organ is pursued by a greater number of talented young men. Mr. S. P. Warren's famous organ recitals at Grace Church, New York, are finding imitation, and the art of organ-playing is, in America, making great progress. All these improvements are the natural result of the spreading throughout the country of a more general taste for good music and good performances. (See also Chaps. X. and XI. of my "Music in England.")

American Composers. — The history of music in America is apparently now entering on a new epoch, and, it is to be hoped, a most important one. So far the divers labors in the musical field have been, more or less, preparatory ones, — an endeavor to promote a more general musical culture, and thus to build up a genuine musico-æsthetic taste among the people. These aims could only be reached by means of the understanding and appreciation of fine classical and modern compositions, as created by those European nations who have most directly influenced past musical efforts in America. The writing of simple ballads and showy *salon* pianoforte pieces has been, so far, the only field in which American composers, native or resident, have found any chance of recognition or success. The small phalanx of courageous, persevering musicians, who, in spite of ill-success in a remunerative sense, have devoted their talent to the composition of works in large, complex forms, such as oratorios, cantatas, symphonies, overtures, concertos, operas, etc., is daily increasing all over the land. "We are busily making music in all styles, but an American school of music does not yet exist. Native American or immigrant American composers are, according to their education, traditions, or individual taste, disciples of

either of the three (Italian, French, German) schools of music. In the compositions of native musicians, the germs of new fundamental art-elements are so far not to be perceived. Superiority of melodic inventiveness, artistic workmanship, mastery of formal construction, poetical expression, all considered in the spirit of European art, are the sole qualities which distinguish the work of one composer (native or immigrated) from that of another." [1]

It is not my business here to give a critical estimate of the works of American composers. I shall reserve this for a future occasion, and restrict myself merely to the mentioning of the names of those musicians who have, as far as I am aware, endeavored to do good, meritorious work in the field of the higher branches of composition. My list comprises the names of those immigrated musicians who, by means of their talent and knowledge, have honestly helped to create an elevated musical atmosphere, and promote musical culture, as well as those who, perchance born of European parents on American soil, have greatly profited by the solid artistic labor of "those foreigners." Every honest promoter of an ideal, pure art-endeavor who has settled here is justly entitled to an honored place in the annals of the History of Music in America. I give here a list of the names of those American composers now living, and some of whose works are known to me.

[1] Ritter: Manual of Musical History.

ABBREVIATIONS.

Op. Operas. — Ort. Oratorios. — C. Cantatas. — Chm. Chamber-music. — Chr. Church-music. — Sym. Symphonies, symphonic poems. — Orchm. Short orchestral movements. — O. Overtures. — Pf. Pianoforte music. — S. Songs. — PS. Part-songs. — V. Violin music. — Org. Organ music.

Ahrens, F. S. — Orchm. S. PS.
Bassford, W. K. — Chr. Op. S. Pf.
Beck, J. A. — Orchm. Chm. S.
Bird, A. — Sym. S. Chm. Pf.
Blodgett, B. C. — O. Chm. Chr. Pf.
Brandeis, F. — C. Pf. S. Chm. PS.
Bristow, G. — Ort. Op. Sym. O. Chr. C. S. Pf.
Buck, D. — Ort. Op. Orchm. O. Chm. Chr. C. S. Org. PS.
Burr, W. — Chm. Pf. S.
Chadwick, G. W. — Sym. C. Pf. PS. Chr. Chm. O.
Cornell, J. H. — Chr. S. Org.
Dayas, W. — Chm. Pf. S.
Dossert, E. G. — Chr. S.
Eichberg, J. — Op. Chm. V. S.
Emery, H. — Pf. S.
Florio, C. — Sym. Chr. S. Pf. Chm.
Foote, A. — Chm. Pf. S. Chr. O.
Foerster, A. H. — Orchm. Pf. S.
Gilchrist, W. W. — C. Chr. Chm. S.
Gleason, F. G. — Op. C. Orchm. S. Chr.
Goldbeck, R. — Op. C. Pf. S. Chm. PS.
Hamerik, A. — Op. C. Sym. S.
Hoffman, R. — Pf. S. Chr.
Hopkins, J. — Sym. S. Chr. Pf.
Huss, H. H. — Chr. S. Pf. Chm.
Kelley, E. S. — Orchm. C. S. Pf.
Klein, B. O. — Chm. Orchm. S. Pf. Chr.
Kroeger, E. R. — Chm. Pf. S.
Liebling, E. — Pf. S.
MacDonald, C. A. — Pf. Orchm.
Mason, W. — Pf.
Merz, K. — Chm. Pf. S. Chr.
Mills, S. B. — Pf.
Mollenhauer, Ed. — Op. Sym. V. S.
Nicholl, H. W. — Sym. Ort. Chr. S. Chm. O.
Paine, J. K. — Ort. Sym. Chm. Chr. S. Pf. C. O. PS.
Parker, J. C. D. — C. Chr. PS. S. Chm.
Pratt, S. G. — Op. Sym. Pf. S.
Ritter, F. L. — Sym. O. Chm. Chr. C. S. Pf. PS. Ort.
Schoenfeld, H. — C. S. Pf. Orchm. Chr.
Shelley, H. R. — Orchm. Org. Chr. S. Pf.
Singer, O. — Sym. Chm. C. Pf.
Smith, W. G. — S. Pf.
Strelezki, A. — Pf. S.
Strong, G. T. — C. Sym. Pf. S. Chm.
Warren, S. P. — Org. S.
West, J. A. — Chr. S. Org. Pf.
Whiting, G. M. — C. Org. Orchm. O. Chr. S. Pf.

America, having advanced so well in musical culture (although much of its love for music is a good deal yet shown in the patronage of light music, fit only for temporary amusement), is now the coveted land of all that sings, plays, fiddles, toots, scrapes, throughout Europe. American opera and concert managers are wont and expected to pay enormously high salaries; thus every European musician, "from the cradle to the grave," is turning his eyes towards "le pays des dollars."

About fifty years ago, a writer in the "Leipsic General Musical Gazette," taking his information from the "London Harmonicon," wrote:—

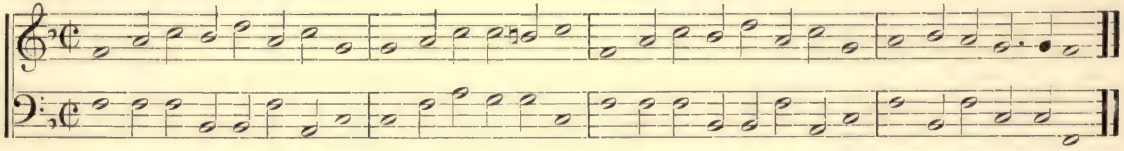
"In New York and Philadelphia the noble art of music has not yet reached a great height; they are, however, beginning to show more taste for musical amusements. About a year ago they made an attempt to perform Handel's 'Messiah' [probably the one under Hill's direction, see Chap. XI. of this work]. The premature enterprise, however, did not succeed very well, and the doings of the private musical clubs are described in a curious manner by an ear-witness. But people sing, people play, and consider both as belonging to culture. *In a few years hence this will offer a rich harvest to European artists.*" (The italics are mine.)

Well, this point we have now amply reached.

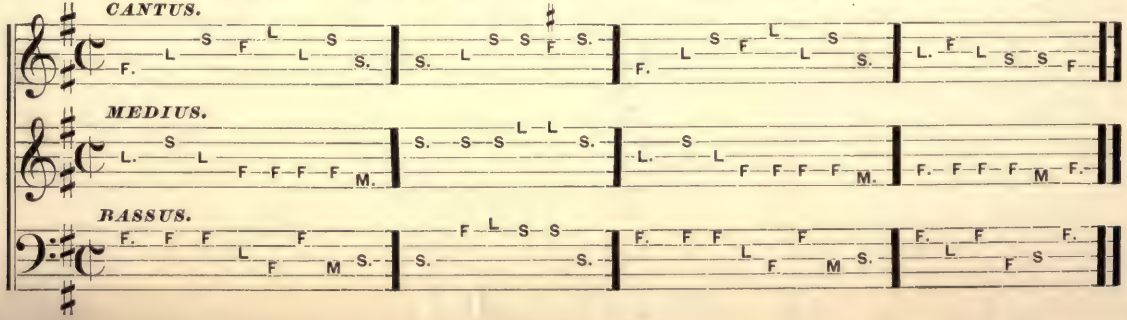
MUSICAL EXAMPLES.

I.

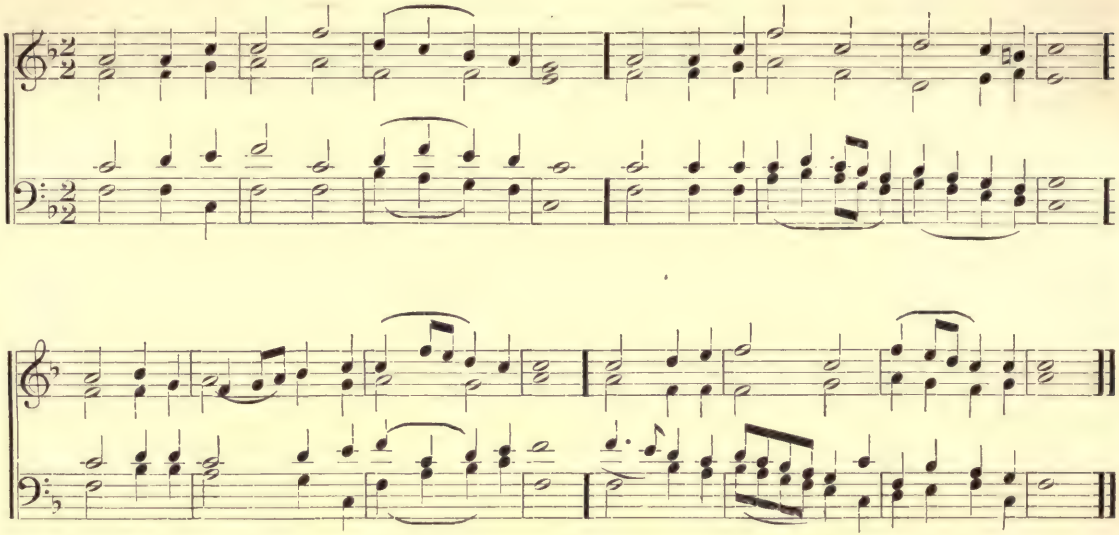
YORK TUNE.

IN HART'S PSALTER 1615. TWO PART SETTING BY JOHN PLAYFORD.

II.

YORK TUNE. C. M.

IN TUFT'S LETTER NOTATION ACCORDING TO PLAYFORD'S THREE PART SETTING.

III.

CHESTER.

MELODY IN THE TENOR. BILLINGS. 1770.

IV.

YORK TUNE.

FOUR PART SETTING IN LAW'S CURIOUS NOTATION

THE GAMUT.

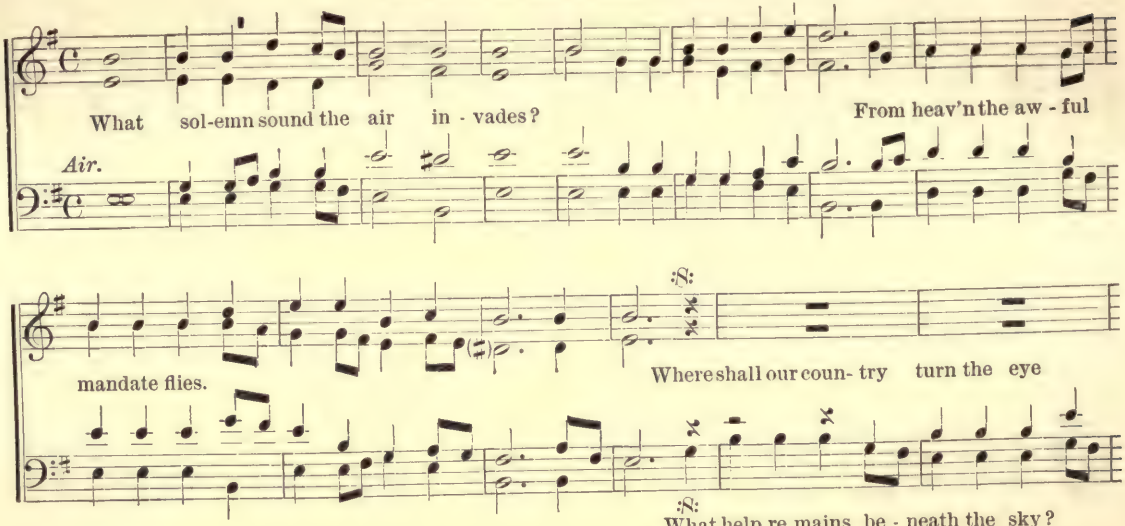
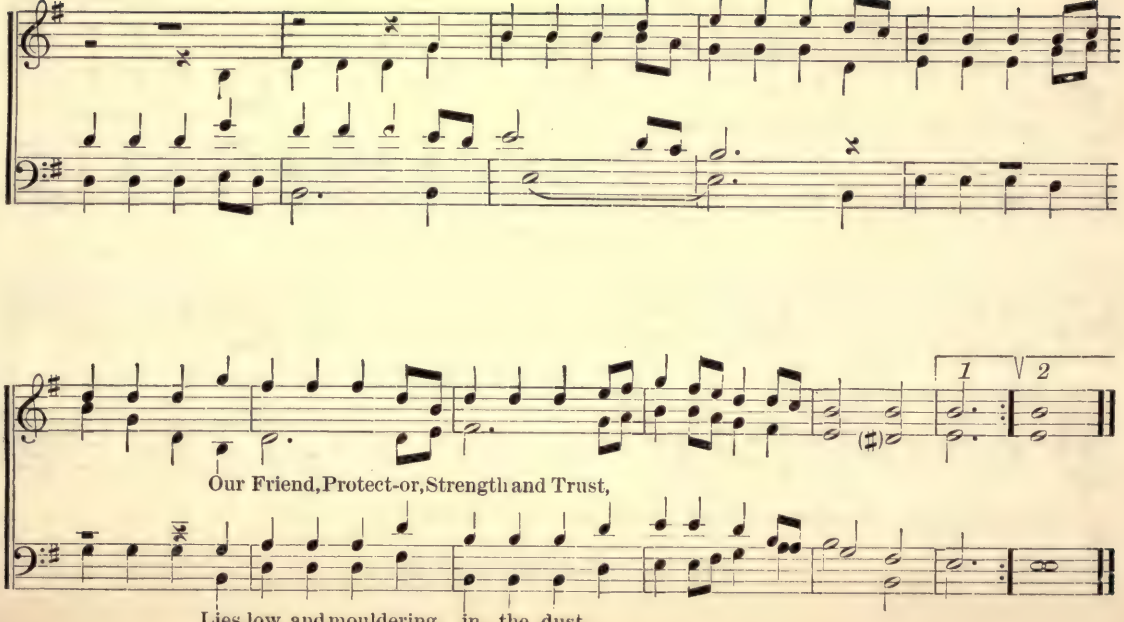
G sol-re-ut in alt . . . . sol
F fa-ut . . . . . fa
E la . . . . . la
D la-sol . . . . . sol
C sol-fa . . . . . fa
B fa-be-mi . . . . . Mi
A la-mi-re . . . . . la
G sol-re-ut—Cliff sol
F fa-ut . . . . . fa
E la-mi . . . . . la
D la-sol-re . . . . . sol
C sol-fa-ut—Cliff fa
B fa-be-mi . . . . . Mi
A la-mi-re . . . . . la
G sol-re-ut . . . . . sol
F fa-ut—Cliff fa
E la-mi . . . . . la
D sol-re . . . . . sol
C fa-ut . . . . . fa
B mi . . . . . Mi
A re . . . . . la
Gamut . . . . . sol

Treble or Tenor.
Tenor or Contra-tenor.
Bassus.

VI.

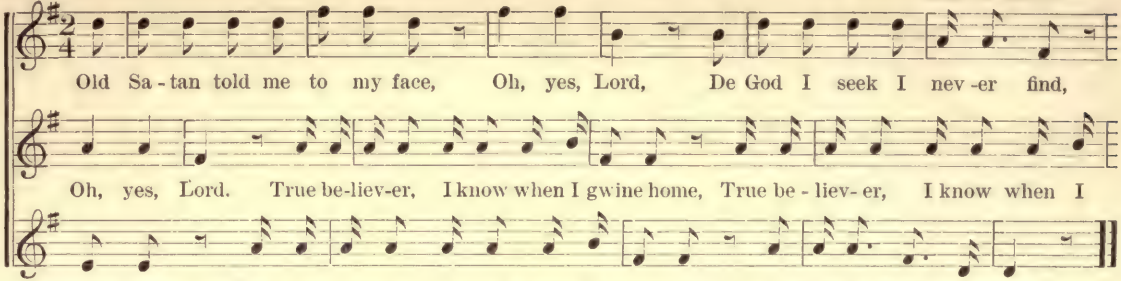
MOUNT VERNON. L. M.

COMPOSED ON THE DEATH OF GEN. WASHINGTON, 1799. BY JENKS.


What sol-emn sound the air in - vades?
From heav'n the aw - ful
Air.
mandate flies.
Where shall our coun- try turn the eye
What help re mains be - neath the sky?

1
2
Our Friend, Protect-or, Strength and Trust,
Lies low and mouldering in the dust.

VII.

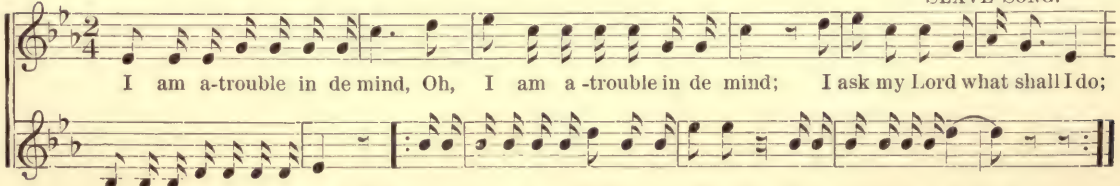
I KNOW WHEN I'M GOING HOME.

SLAVE SONG.

Old Sa - tan told me to my face, Oh, yes, Lord, De God I seek I nev - er find,
Oh, yes, Lord. True be-liev-er, I know when I gwine home, True be - liev - er, I know when I
gwine home. Trne be - liev - er, I know when I gwine home, I been a - fraid to die.

VIII.

I'M A-TROUBLE IN DE MIND.

SLAVE SONG.


I am a-trouble in de mind, Oh, I am a -trouble in de mind; I ask my Lord what shall I do;
I am a-trouble in de mind. I'm a-trouble in de mind, What you doubt for? I'm a-trouble in de mind.

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NOTE. — I have excluded the biographies of a great many operatic singers and instrumentalists, which may easily be found in encyclopædias and musical dictionaries.

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